THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TONGUE.

Under theſe following Heads.

1 Of Converſation.
2 The Babbler.
3 The Silent Man.
4 The Witty Man.
5 The Droll.
6 The Jeſter.
7 The Diſputer.
8 The Opiniater.
9 The Heedleſs and Inconſiderate Man.
10 The Complimenter.
11 The Man, who praiſes others.
12 The Flatterer.
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20 The Adviſer.
21 The Reprover.
22 The Inſtructer.
23 The Man, who truſts others, or is truſted with a Secret.
24 The Tongue of Women.
25 The Language of Love.
26 The Complaining Man.
27 The Comforter.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

Advertiſement

Concerning this VVork.

I.

IF I Should ſay, that I writ this Book at the Sollicitation of my Friends, and that I was moved to get it Printed by their repeated intreaties, I ſhou'd impoſe upon the Publick; ſeeing I have communicated my Deſign to no Body: I ſhall not therefore juſtify my ſelf at the coſt of others, if the Publick does not receive this Work ſo kindly, as it is natural for an Author to wiſh.

II.

The only thing I aim at by Publiſhing this Book, is to be in ſome manner uſeful to thoſe, who ſhall read it, by imparting to them the continual Reflections, which I began to make uſe of ſome years ago, and which I uſe ſtill for the Government of my Tongue: Becauſe I have always obſerved, that there is nothing more dangerous, than not to know how to govern it, and that it does very much contribute to make us happy, or unhappy. Our Faults do common-

ly proceed from our wrong Judgments; our wrong Judgments from falſe Impreſſions; and falſe Impreſſions from the Commerce we have one with another, by the help of Language. The Tongue is, as if it were, the Helm of our Conduct: Tho' it be very ſmall, yet it is the moſt important part of the Veſſel, becauſe it turns it as it pleaſes. If we conſider it well, we ſhall find, that *Speaking* is partly the cauſe of the Good or Evil, that happens to us: We are very often loved or hated, eſteem'd or deſpiſed, and neglected or feared, upon account of our Words. By this means we may be very much elevated, or precipitated into a low and mean ſtate; by this means we may grow Rich, or fall into Poverty; by this means we may be very acceptable to others, or rejected by them with great indignation. Laſtly, Men do commonly judge of our Merit by our Words. Let no Body think therefore that I have been moved to Publiſh this Book out of ſelf-love, and out of a great deſire of being ſpoken of: I only deſign to let others know the method I follow, in order to ſpeak: If they don't like it, they are not obliged to follow it. I publiſh what I think, without pretending that others ſhou'd think preciſely as I do: I publiſh my Thoughts, my Reflections, my Conjectures; which can be no Deciſions for any Body, but thoſe, who

who ſhall think, reflect and conjecture as I do. I don't pretend ſo much to inſtruct others, as to give an Account of my own Inſtructions, which I have endeavoured to practice. If they are approved by my Readers, they ought to make a good uſe of 'em as well as I. No Man has a privilege, whereby he may be diſpleaſed from following Truth, Juſtice, and Reaſon, whoever ſhews them to him.

III.

The Definitions of Vices and Virtues are well known; every Body knows what is Good and Evil; the World is full of Books, which teach us how to think, how to ſpeak, and how to behave our ſelves; we ſee every where ſome Characters and Pictures of Manners, ſome Rules for the Civil Life, ſome Inſtructions, Advices, and Maxims concerning the Duties of Men in their ſeveral Stations: But are they practiſed? Do we find any Author, who makes it his buneſs to practice his own Advices and Rules, that he may prove the facility or poſſibility thereof by his own Example? There is nothing more eaſy than to ſpeak; and therefore we ſee many great and fine *Speakers*: There is nothing more difficult than to do, and therefore we ſee very few *Doers*. No Body ought therefore to take it

ill, if, whilſt I ſhew how a Man muſt govern his Tongue, I tell with ſo much ſincerity what I do to govern my own. I don't pretend that my Readers ought to believe that I do exactly practice the Rules, which have been given me by word of Mouth, or which I have read in Books, or found out by my own Meditations. I only deſign to tell 'em, what I have done to make a good uſe of all thoſe Inſtructions. I confeſs, to my own ſhame, that I am far from being ſo perfect, as I intended to be; I do ingenuouſly acknowledge it; and ſuch an acknowledgement is ſo much the more advantageous to me, becauſe it excites me to make a new progreſs in the practice of the Inſtructions contain'd in this Book.

IV.

I ſpeak often of *my ſelf* in this Work, not that I believe that the Publick will be deſirous to know me, or that I deſire to be known to the Publick; on the contrary, I wiſh with all my Heart, that I may hide my ſelf, but only to impart to others the Reflections and Practices, which *I* made uſe, and which *I* uſe ſtill every day for the Conduct of my Life, as the moſt proper means to ſpeak with diſcretion, and to be Silent and Prudent. If any body complains that I ſpeak too much of *my ſelf*, I complain on the other hand, that Men don't ſpeak enough of *themſelves*. I ſhou'd be more

moved

moved with the Diſcourſes of an Author, who ſhould tell me: *I uſe ſuch and ſuch means, to avoid ſuch a fault, and to acquire ſuch a perfection*, than when he tells me, *do this, do that*, without ſhewing me by his own experience, that it is an eaſy thing to practice what he adviſes me to. I proteſt therefore, that I don't ſpeak of my ſelf out of any preſumption: I am far from having ſuch Perfections as might afford me ſuch a pretence. Laſtly, if any Body is offended at me for it, if it be ſaid, that I don't practice what I pretend to practice; well, without loſing any time in examining whether I deſerve to be cenſured or not, let my Readers examin only, whether what I ſay be practicable, and ought to be practiſed. For my part, when I hear any body ſay, *There's an Author, who gives very fine Inſtructions, but does not practice 'em.* Well, ſay I, let us practice 'em for him, it was the thing he aim'd at when he publiſh'd 'em. Such wrangling does not become a Man, who does ſincerely deſire to make himſelf perfect.

V.

I writ this Book, and this Book improves me every day: The more I reflect upon what it contains, the more I poliſh and perfect my ſelf. Perhaps ſuch an advantage

vantage is an effect of Self-love, becauſe I may be pre-poſſeſt in favour of my Work: However it be, I am the better for it. Can any Body make a better uſe of Self-love? Nevertheleſs, I find my ſelf ſo imperfect ſtill, that I ſhould be very willing to hide my ſelf, if I could. The Perfection I have acquir'd, does rather deſerve the name of an Imperfection, which leſſens every day, than that of Perfection.

VI.

The Reader will not find here any Metaphiſical Abſtractions, any Advice more ſpiritual than practicable, nor any Ideas of Perfection ſo ſublime, that Men do commonly deſpair to them: This Book contains nothing but familiar Truths, and ſuch Practices as are not above the reach of thoſe, who will make a tryal of 'em.

VII.

After all, if no Body reads my Book, I ſhall not be troubled for it, by reaſon of my good intention, and of the advantage which I reap every day from it. I ſhall accuſe no Body of injuſtice; I ſhall only ſay, that I was miſtaken, when I thought that my Book wou'd be of ſome uſe: I am certainly more willing to truſt the Judgment

of

of the Publick, than my own: A Man is commonly no good Judge in his own Cauſe.

VIII.

If ſome nice Men don't find in this Work, all the Politeneſs, and all the ſcrupulous Expreſſions which they wou'd have, I ſhall be contented, provided they underſtand me; (which will be no difficult thing) provided they grant that what I ſay is good, and deſerves to be practiſed by them: I deſire no more, and I think this is all they can wiſh for. What! Wou'd they condemn a good Moral Maxim for a ſmall Grammatical Fault? Let no Body therefore look here for a Polite, but only for a Judicious Language. I have not neglected the firſt, but I made my chief Buſineſs of the ſecond.

IX.

The Reader will, perhaps, obſerve here ſome Thoughts, which he may have obſerved ſome where elſe: I have read no other Books within theſe few Years, but ſuch as might ſerve me to regulate my Conduct; and therefore I make no doubt, but that there are ſeveral Thoughts of other Men in this Work, beſides thoſe which I have quoted. I do willingly reſtore 'em to thoſe whom

whom they belong to, and I ſhou'd be glad to name the Owners of 'em, if I could remember their Names: But I have ſo much handled and meditated upon them, for my own uſe, that I have forgot from whence I had 'em, and I fancy that they are my own: And therefore let thoſe, who are more willing to Criticize Books than to be the better for them, take care, leſt, whilſt they cenſure me, they ſhou'd cenſure thoſe, who have better parts than I have. *Montagne* expreſſes himſelf agreeably upon this Sebject: (*l. 2. c. 10.*) *I conceal the Name of the Author, on purpoſe to refrain the raſhneſs of thoſe haſty Men, who fall fowl upon all ſorts of Books. I am willing that they ſhou'd give a Fillip to* Plutarch *upon my Noſe, and that they ſhou'd ſcald themſelves in abuſing* Seneca, *thinking to abuſe me.*

A TABLE OF THE Several MAXIMS Contain'd in this Treatiſe.

I. Of Converſation.

MAxim 1. *Converſation improves Learning, and makes it agreeable.* page 1.

2. *The more you'll give to other Men occaſion to pleaſe in Converſation, the more you'll pleaſe them.* 3.

3. *Every Body ought to be ſo much Maſter of his Diſcourſe, as to bear, without any impatience, to be interrupted.* 5.

4. *When any Body has done ſpeaking, be ſilent for a little while, to ſee whether he has any thing elſe to ſay.* 6.

5. *No right Anſwer can be given to a Queſtion, that is not underſtood.* 8.

6. *Confidence is a greater help to Converſation than Wit.* 9.

7. *No*

7. *No Man ought to make it his Buſineſs to take up any Body in Converſation, for every wrong thing which he may let fall.* 10.

8. *You muſt fancy, when you happen to be in any Converſation, that you are playing at Cheſs: Conſider well the diſpoſition of the Game, before you move any Piece.* 11.

9. *Whoever ſpeaks always of himſelf, will at laſt give others occaſion to ſpeak ill of him.* 12.

10. *It requires a great deal of Prudence, Circumſpection and Art, to ſpeak of a Man in his preſence.* 13.

11. *A Man free from Vanity, will ſeldom ſpeak much.* 14.

12. *Speak to be underſtood, as well as to be heard.* 15.

13. *Be ſure not to make your ſelf ſo ſingular in Converſation, as to be look'd upon as an Original, which every Body would be aſham'd to be the Copy of.* 16.

14. *An Immodeſt Tongue is the Interpreter of a Corrupt Heart.* 18.

15. *Never ask any Man a Queſtion, unleſs you think he can Anſwer it.* 19.

16. *It is a ridiculous thing for a Man to be aſhamed to ask a Queſtion, in order to inſtruct himſelf.* ibid.

17. *Exaggerations are as many proſtitutions of ones Reputation, becauſe they lay open the ſhallowneſs of his Underſtanding, and his ill Taſte.* 20.

18. *Silence is the Safeguard of Ignorance.* 21.

II. The

II. The Babbler.

MAX. 1. *It is very difficult, not to ſay impoſſible, to ſpeak much, and to the purpoſe* page 22.

2 *Whoever ſpeaks too much, does often betray himſelf.* 23.

3. *Great Talkers are commonly very Contemptible, and very much Deſpiſed.* 24.

4. *A Great Talker will always ſpeak, tho' no Body minds him, nor does he mind any Body, when they ſpeak to him.* 26.

5. *Great Talkers are as much fear'd as they are deſpiſed.* 27.

6. *Great Talkers ſpoil their beſt Actions, by ſpeaking too much of 'em.* 28.

7. *Great Talkers are commonly too Curious.* 29.

8. *A Babbler is ſo buſy with Talking, that he forgets to Act.* 30.

2. *They, who think little, ſpeak a great deal.* 31.

III. The Silent Man.

MAxim 1. *They, who ſpeak little, don't want many Precepts.* 33.

2. *A Man ought to ſpeak to himſelf, before he ſpeaks to others.* 34.

3. *A Word ſpoken unſeaſonably, may be of a moſt dangerous conſequence.* 35.

4. *Tho' a Man ſpeaks little, yet he may make a great Figure in Converſation.* 36.

5. *Words ought to be like Gold, which is of great Value, tho' of a ſmall Bulk.* 37.

6. *The plaineſt Man, if he knows how to be ſilent, may deceive the moſt cunning Man.* 38.

7. *A Silent Man is only to be eſteemed, when his Silence is ſeaſonable.* 39.

IV. The Witty Man.

MAxim 1. *A Witty and Satyrical Saying is enough to ſpoil the merit of the beſt Work, and the Reputation of the moſt Honeſt Man* 40.

2. *The Salt of Witty Sayings is the Seaſoning of a Converſation, and makes it agreeable.* 41.

3. *A Man may bring himself into trouble for having said a Witty thing.* 42.

4. *The more a Man loves to be Witty, the more he is vexed, when others are not affected with what he says.* 43.

5. *A Man does often run the hazard of losing a Witty Saying, when he gives it as his own.* ibid.

V. The Droll.

MAxim 1. *Drolleries are good for nothing, when a Man values them too much, and they are only good, when he does not pretend that they are so.* 44.

2. *They, who make others Laugh, are seldom esteemed.* 45.

VI. The Jesting Man.

MAxim 1. *Avoid Jesting, as a Snare, which your Mind lays to your Tranquillity.* 46.

2. *A profest Jeerer, will seldom bear a Jest.* 47.

3. *Every Jest is an Injury to some Men.* 48.

4. *A Man given to Jesting, ought to have as much regard to his Hearers, as to those whom he jeers.* 49.

5. *No Man will Jeer his Friend, if he looks upon him as one half of himself.*

6. *It is as ſhameful a thing for a Superiour to jeer his Inferiour, as it is for a Man well arm'd to attack a Man, who having no Arms cannot defend himſelf.* 50.

7. *When a Man jeſts upon Religion, 'tis a great ſign he has none.* 51.

VII. The Diſputer.

MAxim 1. *The Diſputes of Learned Men about Doctrines, or Matters of Fact, will frequently turn into Perſonal Quarrels.* 52.

2. *Never diſpute with a deſign to contradict others, but to inſtruct your ſelf.* 54.

3. *Never make a trifling thing the Subject of a great Diſpute.* 56.

4. *The Reaſon why Diſputes do commonly laſt a long time, is, becauſe the Diſputants are a long time without underſtanding one another.* 58.

5. *Some Men in their Diſputes, meaſure the worth of their Arguments by the Number and Weight of their Words.* 59.

6. *Silence is not always a Sign of Diſcretion in a Diſpute.* 60.

7. *We are not commonly ſo much diſpleaſed with the Opinions of other Men, as we are with their paſſionate, preſumptuous, haughty and obſtinate manner of maintaining them.* 61.

8. *A Man ought to be very ſure of a Fact, before he diſputes about the manner of it, or its Nature and Properties.* 62.

VIII. The Opiniater.

MAxim 1. *An Opiniater does not yield, becauſe he is reſolv'd never to yield.* 64.
2. *The beſt way to deal with an Opiniater, is to be ſilent.* 65.

IX. The Heedleſs and Inconſiderate Man.

MAxim 1. *Inconſiderateneſs is the Cauſe of moſt Faults, that are committed in the Commerce of the World.* 66.
2. *A heedleſs Man ſpeaks and hears wrong.* 67.

X. The Complimenter.

MAx. 1. *Compliments are authorized by Uſe; therefore every Body ought to make only as many Compliments, and ſuch as Uſe requires.* 69.

XI. The Man who praiſes others.

MAx. 1. *Praiſes are extremely ſweet and agreeable, when they are judicious.* 71.

2. *It is a ridiculous thing to praiſe a Man for ſuch things as are not properly his own.* 72.

3. *They, who don't deſerve to be praiſed, are often ſparing of their praiſes.* 73.

4. *They, who praiſe Men only to pleaſe them, betray their Judgment by too much Complaiſance.* 74.

5. *Men are very willing to hear the praiſes that are beſtowed upon them; but they are very unwilling to hear the praiſes which a Man beſtows upon himſelf.* 75.

6. *Praiſes are often a meer intereſted Commerce.* 77.

7. *'Tis likely that a Man is ſincere in his Praiſes, if he dares blame you, when he thinks you are to blame.* 79.

8. *Seek not to be praiſed, but think only of deſerving it.* 80.

9. *It is a kind of Injury done to Man, not to Praiſe him dexterouſly.* 82.

10. *It requires a great skill to find out a juſt medium in our Praiſes.* ibid.

11. *We muſt have as much regard to thoſe who hear our Praiſes, as to thoſe upon whom we beſtow them.* 83.

12. *A Man, who is extremely fond of Praiſes, would have no Body but himſelf to be Praiſed.* 84.

XII. The Flatterer.

MAx. 1. *We are our firſt Flatterers.* 85.
2. *Flatterers, who Praiſe Great Men for an imaginary merit, lull them aſleep in real miſeries.* 88.
3. *Men will often cover and flatter the defects of others, to hide their own.* 92.
4. *No Man ought to avoid the Character of a Flatterer ſo, as to become a brutiſh man.* 93.

XIII. The Lyar.

MAx. 1. *A Lyar is hated by God, and deſpiſed by Men.* 94.
2. *A Lyar is not to be truſted.* 95.

XIV. The Boaſting Man.

MAx. 1. *They, who have the leaſt Courage, are often the boldeſt in their Words.* 96.
2. *He that Boaſts of a good thing he has done, gives occaſion to believe that he did it only to Boaſt of it.* 98.
3. *The Words of thoſe who boaſt themſelves, to appear conſiderable men, are ſeldom attended with any Action.* 100.
4. *The Boaſting man is commonly a deciding man.* 102.

XV. The Ill Tongue.

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2. *If a detracting man does no harm to thoſe whom he ſpeaks ill of, 'tis only for want of an occaſion.* 105.

3. *A detracting man, who knows that he gives occaſion to ſpeak ill of him, thinks to juſtify himſelf by ſpeaking ill of others.* 106.

XVI. The Swearer.

MAx. 1. *You ought to rely more upon Virtue and Probity, than upon Oaths.* 108.

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XVII. The Promiſer.

MAx. 1. *Never promiſe any thing without theſe two Proviſo's, If I can, If it be not againſt my Duty.* 110.

2. *He, who is always ready to promiſe, will not be ſo ready to perform what he has promiſed.* 112.

3. *Men do often promiſe according to their hopes, and keep their promiſes according to their fear.* 113.

4. *A man goes more by promiſing, than by performing what he has promiſed.* 114.

XVIII. The Noveliſt.

MAx. 1. *When a pre-poſſeſt Noveliſt ſpeaks the Truth, 'tis a meer chance.* 115.

2. *Tho' a Noveliſt is no farther concern'd in great Events than to relate them, yet he thinks himſelf concern'd in the execution of 'em.* 116.

3. *The profeſt Noveliſt is equally pleaſed with good and ill News.* 117.

4. *Whilſt a Noveliſt regulates in his fancy the Affairs of the State, he commonly orders his own very ill.* 118.

XIX. The Tale-bearer.

MAx. 1. *A Tale-bearer is often a Pabbler or a malicious man.* 120.

2. *Don't give free acceſs to a Tale-bearer.* 121.

3. *You ought to be leſs inclined to believe a Report, than to hear it.* 122.

XX. The Adviſing Man.

MAx. 1. *The beſt Advice is that which is given ſeaſonably.* 124.

2. *The advice which ſeems to be given with the greateſt ſincerity, and is conſequently the moſt acceptable, is that which a man ſeems to give without any ſelf-intereſt.* 125.

3. *A man ought to be wiſe, or, if he is not, he ought to be adviſed by thoſe that are ſo.* 127.

XXI. The Reprimanding Man.

MAX. 1. *We ought to reprimand weak men with Condeſcention, tractable men with Simplicity, refractory men with Authority, and all of 'em with Prudence and Circumſpection.* 130.

2. *They, who deſerve moſt to be Praiſed, will bear a Reprimand with more patience.* 134.

XXII. The Inſtructing Man.

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2. *In order to diſpoſe Men to receive Inſtruction, we muſt win their affection, before we require of them that they ſhould perform their Duty.* 137.

3. *When you inſtruct others, be always ſo much Maſter of your ſelf, as to give no hold to impatience.* 144.

4. *Whilſt you imprint the knowledge of Juſtice in the minds of thoſe whom you inſtruct, take care to form in 'em the habit of that Virtue.* 145.

5. *The beſt Inſtructions are thoſe which are grounded upon the ſolid Principles of Religion.* 151.

XXIII. The

XXIII. The Man, who truſts others, or is truſted with a Secret.

MAx. 1. *What we have been truſted with by others does not belong to us, it is a Sacred Thing, which we ought never to make uſe of.* 152.

2. *Whoever imparts an important Secret to another Man, makes himſelf voluntarily his Slave.* 155.

XXIV. The Tongue of Women.

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2. *There is no Secret, which a Woman will keep better, than that of her Age.* 163.

3. *When Women are immodeſt in their Words, they give occaſion to believe, that they are immodeſt in their Lives.* 165.

XXV. The Language of Love.

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2. *Tho' the Love we expreſs for others, ſeems to be never ſo much unintereſted, yet it has always ſome relation to Self-love.* 169.

3. *As we don't appear always lovely, ſo we muſt not expect to be always loved.* 170.

4. *An angry Lover is extremely deſirous to allay his Anger.* 172.

XXVI. The

XXVI. The Complaining Man.

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2. *The Complaints of Men do not ſo much proceed from their great Sufferings, as from too great a niceneſs.* 177.

XXVII. The Comforter.

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2. *He, who knows not how to Comfort himſelf, will not be able to Comfort others.* 180.
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To keep one's ſelf from being vexed at the contempt, iujurious words, and evil-ſpeaking of other Men. 195.
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THE

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TONGUE.

I. *Of Converſation.*

MAXIM I.

Converſation improves Learning, and makes it agreeable.

REFLECTION.

NOthing can be more tedious than a Learned Man confined to his Study, who, being a perfect ſtranger to the World, happens to be in Company of Men equally Learned and Polite. Either he ſays nothing, or, if he

ſpeaks, he does it in ſuch a dry, ruſtical, wild and perplexed manner, that every Body is as uneaſy at it as himſelf. A Man muſt have no Commerce with the World, or, if he pretends to it, he ought to know how to contribute to the pleaſure of thoſe with whom he converſes. You may, if you pleaſe, inſtruct your ſelf in your Cloſet, in the moſt abſtracted Metaphyſical Truths; but don't go about to produce them in ſome Aſſemblies, thinking that they ſhall be heard with the ſame Application that you uſed to apprehend 'em. If you are reſolved to diſcourſe of them, do it with ſo much Clearneſs, that they may not require more Attention than can be given at ſuch a time, when Men, who are then very jealous of their Liberty, are extreamly afraid of a long Chain of Arguments, and of every thing that will make 'em uneaſy. If I am tedious when I ſpeak, tho' I ſpeak never ſo well, it will be to no purpoſe: The tediouſneſs of my Diſcourſe will render every thing that I ſhall ſay unpleaſant. Whoever will live in Society muſt make himſelf Sociable; and the only way to learn to be Sociable, is to be often in Society. Converſation is the great Book of the World, which teaches the uſe of other Books: Learning is ruſtical without it, and deprived of all manner of Charms: Study

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improves the Talents of Nature, but they are wrought on by Converſation: The moſt Learned bring their Knowledge to a great perfection by ſuch a Commerce, becauſe it gives 'em occaſion to diſcover and reſolve many Difficulties, which they would never have thought of in their Cloſets. I have often perceived in Converſation, that I was ignorant of ſeveral things which I fancy'd I had learn'd well in my private Studies; wherefore I am never ſo ſure of the Truth of what I have learn'd alone, as when I have poliſhed it under the Critical Correction of Men more Learned than my ſelf: So true it is, that the Company of Men of Parts is a School, wherein one may learn with Pleaſure, what they learn'd with Labour.

MAXIM II.

The more you'll give to other Men occaſion to pleaſe in Converſation, the more you'll pleaſe them.

WE give others occaſion to pleaſe, when we give 'em occaſion to ſhew their good Talents. Don't explain things too much to a Man of Parts, let him gueſs a little: Such a Conduct will ſhew your good opinion of him, and nothing can

more flatter his Self-love. We may be eſteem'd by ſhewing a great deal of Wit and Learning in Converſation, but at the ſame time we may be very unacceptable; they, who hear us, are not commonly willing to ſee themſelves ſurpaſs'd: As for me, I am contented to ſhew that I am not altogether Ignorant, when I happen to be with thoſe that cannot bear in the leaſt the Tone of a Maſter: I rather endeavour to perſwade my ſelf, that thoſe with whom I converſe, are ſo many Maſters able to inſtruct me: With ſuch a perſwaſion, 'tis a greater pleaſure to me to hear than to ſpeak. When any Body tells me a Hiſtory, tho' it be known to me with all its circumſtances, yet it gives me more ſatisfaction, than I ſhould have, if I did interrupt the perſon that relates it, to let him know that I am not ignorant of it: I ſhould make him uneaſy by interrupting him; whereas if I let him ſpeak, he enjoys the pleaſure of fancying that he teaches me ſomething that I know not: I am well contented, becauſe I am ſure that he will be better pleaſed with me, than if I ſeem'd to be better inſtructed. To conclude, I am far from affecting to ſurpaſs any Body; on the contrary, in order to be ſuch as I ought to be with reſpect to others, I put 'em, as much as I can, in a way of appearing ſuch as they deſire to appear. By

ſuch

ſuch an obliging Behaviour, we find that we never come out of a Converſation better pleaſed, than when we can flatter our ſelves that others are pleaſed with us.

MAXIM III.

Every Body ought to be ſo much Maſter of his Diſcourſe, as to bear, without any impatience, to be interrupted.

REFLECTION.

WHen we ſpeak to others, we ought chiefly to do it, in order to divert 'em, or inſtruct 'em: This being ſo, why ſhould we be angry when they interrupt us, ſince we ought to believe that they do it only to make their Joy or their Inſtruction more compleat? Perhaps we ſhall be interrupted unſeaſonably; Well, ſhall we be the worſe for it? They, that are Witneſſes of ſuch an unſeaſonable Interruption, will certainly do us Juſtice: Our Patience will no leſs deſerve their eſteem, than the moſt excellent things we could ſay. No Man ought to be a Slave to his Diſcourſe; he ought, if I may ſay ſo, to hold it always in his Hands, that he may handle it according to the ſeveral Occurrences and

Incidents of Converſation: I confeſs it is no eaſy thing; yet it may be done, if Vanity does not hinder it.

MAXIM IV.

When any Body has done ſpeaking, be ſilent for a little while, to ſee whether he has any thing elſe to ſay.

REFLECTION.

WE ſee every day ſome Men extreamly eager to ſpeak next to others, they'll be ſure not to let the Converſation die: Such a one ſpoke laſt, who would ſay ſomething better ſtill, if he was allowed to take breath, that he might continue his Diſcourſe. The Reaſon why moſt Converſations are ſo imperfect, is the eagerneſs which every Body expreſſes to act his part in them, before the part of others be entirely acted. " † I have often " obſerved this fault in that School of the " Commerce of the World, that inſtead " of taking notice of others, we make it " our buſineſs to have others take notice " of us, and we are more careful to put " off our Wares than to get new ones. In

† *Montagne, l.* 1. *c.* 25.

order

order to avoid ſuch a troubleſome Fault, I willingly give every Body time to ſpeak, without any itching deſire of ſpeaking next to him, being perſwaded that if I was eager to ſucceed him in his Diſcourſe, I ſhould never ſpeak right of the Subject he was upon; becauſe, having not given him time to expreſs his thoughts, I ſhould not know all that is neceſſary for me to know, and being entirely poſſeſt with the deſire of ſpeaking, I ſhould not have been attentive enough to what he ſaid. It is moſt certain, that they who are eager to come into the Liſts, do not at all mind the laſt words of thoſe who ſpeak before them: They are only for ſpeaking, and not for hearing. One of the Reaſons why there are ſo few Reaſonable Men to be ſeen in Converſation, is, that moſt Men think rather of what they are going to ſay, than of anſwering preciſely what has been ſaid to them.

MAXIM V.

No right Anſwer can be given to a Queſtion, that is not underſtood.

REFLECTION.

WAnt of Attention is commonly the cauſe of the oddneſs, obſcurity, and diſorder of moſt Converſations; becauſe moſt Men do little mind what they hear, and yet they anſwer with as much Aſſurance, as if they had not loſt a word of what has been ſaid: Thus a Converſation dwindles into a continual Gallimawfrey, for want of underſtanding one another. I have ſo often obſerved the ridiculouſneſs of thoſe, who, out of diſtraction, ask unſeaſonable Queſtions, and return unſeaſonable Anſwers, that I take a ſpecial care to avoid ſuch rambling: I hear what others ſay with great attention, both to inſtruct my ſelf, and that I may not be troubleſome to them. I alſo take care, in order to avoid another Fault that is very common, not to ſpeak for another, whoſe buſineſs it is to Anſwer; becauſe I will not perſwade him, and thoſe who hear me, that I ſuſpect him of Incapacity, nor give 'em occaſion to ſuſpect me of Preſumption.

ſumption. To conclude, I endeavour in all my Anſwers, not to uſe many needleſs words, remembring *Plutarch*'s advice, who ſays, that the Center of the Circumference of an Anſwer, ought to be only that which the Queriſt deſires to know. It is true, that nothing that is ſtudy'd ought to be ſaid in Converſation, but it is true likewiſe, that nothing ought to be ſaid in it raſhly and by chance.

MAXIM VI.

Confidence is a greater help to Converſation than Wit.

REFLECTION.

THey who confide in one another, ſpeak with Freedom; they are not conſtrained; they do mutually open their Hearts, and declare their Mind; nothing can ſtop the Courſe of their free Converſations, ſo that they continue, as much as they can, that ſweet and agreeable Commerce. But when Men deſign to ſhew a great deal of Wit, the Attention, that is required for it, occaſions a dryneſs which ſoon puts an end to the Converſation: Hence

Hence it is, that the freeſt Converſations are the moſt amuſing, becauſe they may be more eaſily kept up. On the contrary, a Studied Converſation is neither acceptable to thoſe who hear it, nor glorious to thoſe that ſpeak. I had rather read a Book, I can leave it at any time, without any inconveniency, when I am weary of it.

MAXIM VII.

No Man ought to make it his buſineſs to take up any Body in Converſation, for every wrong thing which he may let fall.

REFLECTION.

THo' I be never ſo attentive in Converſation, I don't examine with rigour all that is ſaid in it: Converſation is a free Commerce, wherein a great many little things muſt be paſt by, without inquiring into them: As they are often ſpoken without any deſign, ſo they ought to be heard without any Critical Reflections.

MAXIM VIII.

You muſt fancy, when you happen to be in any Converſation, that you are playing at Cheſs: Conſider well the diſpoſition of the Game, before you move any Piece.

REFLECTION.

DOn't Jeſt in a Company, where you ſee ſome afflicted Perſons; don't ſet up for a perpetual Moraliſt amongſt young People, who are altogether bent upon Mirth, Chearfulneſs and Pleaſures. Don't affect to ſpoil the ſport of any Company with ſuch a way and ſuch diſcourſes, as are more proper to frighten than to pleaſe. Don't inveigh againſt Poetry in the preſence of thoſe who pretend to make good Verſes. I had rather ſpeak, in Converſation, of things which I am ſure will be willingly heard, than of what I ſhould be glad to ſay. Whoever brings in an unpleaſant Subject, runs the hazard of making himſelf as unacceptable as the Subject itſelf. I am not very willing to ſpeak of Learning before an Illiterate Man, becauſe I don't deſire to get any Honour by my Learning, at the coſt of another Man' Ignorance.

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MAXIM IX.

Whoever ſpeaks always of himſelf, will at laſt give others occaſion to ſpeak ill of him.

REFLECTION.

HE that will be always the Subject and Object of the Converſation, gives occaſion to think that he loves and eſteems no Body but himſelf; which is enough to loſe the love and eſteem of every Body. What an impertinent part do thoſe Men act in Converſation, who whilſt they are full of themſelves, would have others to mind nothing but them! If I made no great noiſe in Converſation, I may ſay that I have not been very troubleſome in it. I don't love to ſpeak of my ſelf in any Company; for if I ſay any thing to my praiſe, I ſhall make my ſelf ſo ridiculous, that the beſt thing I could ſay, would not be able to make amends for it: If I ſay any thing to my diſadvantage, people will be apt to look upon it as an Artifice to engage others to contradict me: Beſides, why ſhould I ſpeak ill of my ſelf? The Commerce of the World has taught me, that there are many other Men who will be ready to do that. What therefore

fore could I ſay of my ſelf, ſeeing I will neither praiſe nor blame my ſelf?

MAXIM X.

It requires a great deal of Prudence, Circumſpection and Art, to ſpeak of a Man in his preſence.

REFLECTION.

THis is the reaſon why I often ſpeak of thoſe that are preſent under the Names of thoſe who are dead or abſent: With ſuch a precaution, I praiſe them, without ſeeming to be willing to flatter 'em; or I cenſure 'em, without doing 'em any wrong; or I give 'em advice, without ſhocking their Pride.

MAXIM XI.

A Man free from Vanity, will ſeldom ſpeak much.

REFLECTION.

I Think we do no Injuſtice to thoſe who ſpeak much, when we ſuſpect 'em of Pride and Vanity; for, why do they ſpeak ſo much? Is it not becauſe they fancy that what they ſay is worth hearing? As for me, I eſteem my ſelf ſo little, that I never look upon my ſelf as a neceſſary Actor in Converſation: I do very willingly permit all thoſe, who ſhall think that I ſpeak too much, not to mind what I ſay, to fall aſleep in my Preſence, and even to avoid me, as a dangerous Man, and a diſturber of the Civil Society. They'll uſe me, as I wiſh I could uſe others on the like occaſion, and by that means I ſhall endeavour to mend my ſelf, and to grow more Diſcreet and Wiſe. When a Man ſpeaks much, he muſt have ſo much Wit, to ſhew it at all times, that I find it better for me to be ſilent. I love a Converſation, wherein I am not obliged to ſhew more Wit than I have.

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MAXIM XII.

Speak to be underſtood, as well as to be heard.

REFLECTION.

THe clearneſs of a Man's Diſcourſe ſhews the clearneſs of his Conception: Both make Converſation agreeable, becauſe what is ſaid in it is intelligible: I had rather be Silent, than ſpeak without expreſſing my ſelf clearly. We muſt have a ſpecial regard to others, when we ſpeak, for every Body ſpeaks to be underſtood: He who expreſſes himſelf obſcurely and confuſedly, is troubleſome to his Hearers, becauſe they muſt take ſome pains to apprehend what he ſays; but in truth they are ſeldom at ſuch pains; for they do commonly hear ſuch Men, as it were with their Eyes, looking upon them, whilſt their Ears and their Minds are attentive to the leaſt Object, that will cauſe any diſtraction. When I conſider that Men ought to ſpeak intelligibly, I ſhould think that the terms of Art, which are not in common uſe, may very well be laid aſide in ſome familiar Converſations: I had rather a Phyſician ſhou'd ſay, *to let Blood* than

than *to Phlebotomize.* To which I add, that for the ſame reaſon that a Man ought to make himſelf intelligible in his Diſcourſe, they who never ſpeak coherently, and run from one Subject to another, without ending any one of 'em, are inſupportable in their Converſation.

MAXIM XIII.

Be ſure not to make your ſelf ſo ſingular in Converſation, as to be look'd upon as an Original, which every Body would be aſham'd to be the Copy of.

REFLECTION.

THere are but too many ſuch Originals to be ſeen in Converſations. I ſhall mention ſome whom I have often obſerved, and who, by the ſingularity of their Manners, were look'd upon as a ſort of Comical Men, fitter to make one laugh than to be imitated. The firſt that come into my mind, are thoſe who affect to uſe new Words at every turn, which they have taken up as a Jewel, wherewith they pretend to adorn their Diſcourſe: Tho' thoſe Words be never ſo new, they are ſo worn out by their frequent repetitions of 'em, that the oldeſt and the moſt obſolete Words wou'd certainly be heard with greater pleaſure. There

There is another ſort of Originals, I mean thoſe, who coming too near the perſon whom they ſpeak to, ſeem to take his Noſe for his Ears, ſo that they ſplaſh his Face all over with their Spittle; if you retire, they come forwards, and at laſt they drive you into a Corner, where you can no longer avoid the Excrements of their Mouths.

When a Man laughs firſt (and very often alone) after he has ſpoken, 'tis a ſign of a very ridiculous Original. Such an Applauſe, which he gives himſelf, is very near a kin to what we call Sillineſs. There are alſo ſome Laughing Men, who Laugh when there is no reaſon for it, only to ſhew their fine Teeth: The ſaddeſt and the moſt pitiful Objects will make their Mouths laugh, tho' they raiſe Tears in their Eyes.

Another ſort of Men, not to be imitated, are thoſe, who not vouchſafing to ſhew any attention to what is ſaid, think, or ſeem to think by themſelves of any thing elſe, beſides what is the ſubject of the Converſation. When a Man is thoughtful in Company, he gives juſt Ground by ſuch an abſence of Mind, to believe that he does not much care for thoſe that are with him: I think ſo too; and beſides, I believe the Company wou'd be glad to be rid of ſuch raving thoughtful Men. We ſhall ſee in the ſequel of this Work, many other Men

of a Character as odious as thoſe whom I have mention'd.

MAXIM XIV.

An Immodeſt Tongue is the Interpreter of a Corrupt Heart.

REFLECTION.

I Cannot hear a lewd Diſcourſe, or any Immodeſt Equivocations, and looſe Words, without being full of Indignation againſt thoſe who ſpeak them. I ſhall never think my ſelf guilty of a raſh Judgment, if I doubt of the purity of a Man's Life, when he is not aſhamed to take ſuch a Liberty: A pure Life cannot bear any impurity. Words are the Images of Thoughts: An Expreſſion in this caſe, is much the ſame with an Action. It is very difficult for thoſe, who are preſent at ſuch Converſations, where ſome Men make bold to ſay any thing, without any regard to Modeſty, it is, I ſay, very difficult for them to preſerve their Virtue; becauſe the ſenſual Thoughts, that are raiſed in their Minds, will excite 'em to afford to their Senſes, all the Pleaſures which have been repreſented to their Imagination.

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MAXIM XV.

Never ask any Man a Queſtion, unleſs you think he can Anſwer it.

REFLECTION.

I Do commonly obſerve this Rule in all my Queſtions, not to ask any thing but what I think a Man does perfectly know: With ſuch a precaution I inſtruct my ſelf, and I pleaſe thoſe who inſtruct me. The Reputation of other Men ought not to be expoſed without reaſon: every Body is tender of it, becauſe it is a thing, the loſs whereof is moſt ſenſible, and almoſt irreparable.

MAXIM XVI.

It is a ridiculous thing for a Man to be aſhamed to ask a Queſtion, in order to inſtruct himſelf.

REFLECTION.

NO Man ought to be aſhamed to let others know, that he is not ſo preſuming as to think that he knows what he is ignorant of: No Man ought to be

aſhamed, becauſe he is willing to get out of his Ignorance. Whoever pretends to a greater Capacity than he really has, will never have any.

MAXIM XVII.

Exaggerations are as many proſtitutions of ones Reputation, becauſe they lay open the ſhallowneſs of his Underſtanding, and his ill Taſte.

REFLECTION.

IF a Child never ſaw but one Man of a common ſize, he wou'd take him for a Giant, comparing him with himſelf. Thus it is with ſome ſhallow Wits, who, becauſe the moſt common Objects appear to them extraordinary, never mention them without ſome Exaggerations. If the ſhallowneſs of their Underſtanding is not the cauſe of their Hyperbolical Expreſſions, they muſt at leaſt expect to be accounted Liars, or imprudent Men. 'Tis the part of a Wiſe Man, never to uſe a *Superlative*; for ſuch a way of ſpeaking is always repugnant to Truth or Prudence: the Effect of thoſe ſtrained Expreſſions proves moſt times contrary to the Intention of thoſe who

who uſe them; for, the fear they have not to ſay enough to perſwade others, makes 'em ſay too much to be believed. Wiſe Men look upon Exaggerations as prodigies, wonders, and all other extraordinary things; they don't eaſily believe them: Being not commonly very credulous, they only give their aſſent to evident and undeniable Truths; but extraordinary things may be very often doubted of.

MAXIM XVIII.

Silence is the Safeguard of Ignorance.

REFLECTION.

WHen I don't know well a thing that is in debate in a Converſation, my firſt Rule in ſuch a caſe is to be Silent: Tho' Vanity prompts me never ſo much to ſpeak, I hold my Tongue. Silence is of great uſe on ſuch an occaſion to an ignorant Man; for he'll be rather praiſed for his Diſcretion, than ſuſpected of Ignorance.

II.

THE BABBLER.

MAXIM I.

It is very difficult, not to ſay impoſſible, to ſpeak much, and to the purpoſe.

REFLECTION.

EVery Great Talker wants Judgment, but Judgment is neceſſary to ſpeak to the purpoſe: In effect, how can a Man without Judgment know when, how, and why he muſt ſpeak? How can a Great Talker, whilſt he is hurried by the impetuoſity of his Tongue, take time to uſe all thoſe precautions? The only attention he is capable of, is to ſpare as much time as he can, to lanch into Diſcourſe; which he

he can't forbear doing without an extreme Violence to himſelf: If ſo be that he ſpeaks, he does not care whether it be to the purpoſe or not; ſpeaking is the only thing he aims at; 'tis his madneſs, or rather his folly.

MAXIM II.

Whoever ſpeaks too much, does often betray himſelf.

REFLECTION.

IT is the common Fate of great Talkers, not to be able to conceal even their moſt Secret Affairs: Whatever precaution they may uſe, it is very difficult for them, in ſuch a profuſion of Words, not to let fall ſome, that will diſcover what it is their Intereſt to keep ſecret, eſpecially when they ſpeak to Men, that are cunning enough to lay a Snare to their pratling, in order to ſurprize 'em. Seeing therefore a great Talker will betray his own Secrets, I ſhall be ſure not to truſt him with mine: One can't be too cautious with ſuch Men. Their Indiſcretion hinders me from ſetting any value upon the confidence they repoſe in me, becauſe I ſuſpect they do it rather to ſpeak,

than out of a ſincere Confidence in me. "I tell you this as a ſecret, (ſays a Bab-"bler to me, whiſpering in my Ears as "cloſe as ever he can) pray, let no Body "know it; and then he goes and ſays as much and with as low a Voice to every Body he meets in his way: I ſhall certainly be very faithful to him, for whom could I tell his Secret to, that does not know it already of him.

MAXIM III.

Great Talkers are commonly very Contemptible, and very much Deſpiſed.

REFLECTION.

GReat Talkers are very Contemptible, becauſe their great Talk proceeds from a ſhallowneſs of Mind, Heedleſneſs, Indiſcretion, or Weakneſs. Their Weakneſs appears by their being unable to ſtop the current of their Words; their Heedleſneſs, by their continual want of attention to obſerve the Rules of *Decorum* in Converſation; their Indiſcretion, by their having no regard to thoſe they converſe with; the Shallowneſs of their Wit, by the ſmall extent of their Knowledge, which does not per-

permit 'em to penetrate into the Inſide of thoſe who hear 'em, that they may know when it is a proper time to ſpeak, or to be ſilent. They are therefore very much deſpiſed upon all thoſe accounts: No Body vouchſafes to hear what they ſay, they are thought unworthy of any attention. Whilſt they ſpeak, the Souls of thoſe who ſeem to hear 'em, retire within themſelves, and think of any thing elſe beſides what they ſay. They can find no Body that will hear 'em ſpeak, but beſides they cannot ſo much as find any one that will believe what they ſay: So great is the contempt they lye under, that Truth itſelf is deſpiſed, when it comes out of their Mouths: Men are always apt to believe, that a Babbler is a Lyar, becauſe they are perſwaded, that being ſo greedy of ſpeaking, he had rather tell Lies than hold his Tongue, when he has no Truths to tell.

MAXIM IV.

A Great Talker will always ſpeak, tho' no Body minds him, nor does he mind any Body, when they ſpeak to him.

REFLECTION.

ONe wou'd think that the Ears of great Talkers are changed into Tongues; hence it is that they are almoſt incorrigible: In effect, the only way to reform them, is by ſpeaking to them, in order to inſtruct 'em; but they are ſo far from being diſpoſed to hear others, that they will never give over ſpeaking. Whilſt a Babbler tires thoſe who hear him, and raiſes their Indignation againſt him; whilſt they oppoſe what he ſays, I am contented to recollect my ſelf, that I may ſtrengthen the natural averſion I have for his great Talk. My Reflections work more upon me, than their Remonſtrances upon him.

MAXIM V.

Great Talkers are as much fear'd as they are deſpiſed.

REFLECTION.

EVery body ſhuns their Company; every body thinks of retiring as ſoon as they appear; every body keeps ſilence, for fear of giving them occaſion to ſpeak: But they don't obſerve, that if thoſe great Talkers ſpeak, even when they hear others ſpeak, they will be ſure to go on, if they heard no body ſpeak. I have often obſerv'd, that as ſoon as a great Talker begins to open his Mouth, they, who are not obliged out of Decency to keep him company, retire as haſtily as if they were threatened with a violent ſtorm; as Seamen uſe to ſhelter themſelves to avoid a Tempeſt, which they think themſelves threatened with by the rattling of a dangerous Wind: Yet, they don't perceive how uneaſy they are to others, ſo great is the fury of ſpeaking they are poſſeſt with; a Fury which ſhews itſelf further, by their eagerneſs of telling ill News to thoſe, whoſe Intereſt it is to know nothing of them. Nay, every body is afraid to eat at their Table, tho' it

be

be never ſo good, becauſe they riſe from it with the Head-ach, which is not ſo much cauſed by their Wine, as by the continual noiſe of their Tongues: To which you may add the precautions that muſt be uſed againſt the ſeveral motions of their Hands, which they make uſe of to extort an Attention, which no body grants but againſt his will. If a Babbler happens to be by a ſick Man, how uneaſy will he be to a perſon who deſires nothing but reſt and ſilence! Hence it is, that ſeveral People had rather be in the company of a wicked Man, who is diſcreet and ſparing of his words, than of a good Man, who is a Babbler.

MAXIM VI.

Great Talkers ſpoil their beſt Actions, by ſpeaking too much of 'em.

REFLECTION.

NO body values the good things they have done, when they ſpeak too much of 'em: For they ſuſpect at laſt, that if they have done a good Action, it was to have matter for talking; and their talk being very troubleſome, 'tis no wonder if the Action that is the Cauſe of it is not at all eſteem'd. Thus a great Talker will ſpoil the

the beſt things he can do. Indeed, a Man muſt be a great Enemy to himſelf and others, to do himſelf ſo much wrong, and be troubleſome to every body beſides.

MAXIM VII.

Great Talkers are commonly too Curious.

REFLECTION.

BEing deſirous to ſpeak a great deal where-ever they go, they muſt needs look for Matter: In order to find it, they go up and down prying into the ſecrets of Families, to make 'em publick afterwards. A Babbler ſpeaks firſt of others, and then of himſelf, when others afford him no matter for talking; and at laſt, when the Matter is exhauſted, he invents ſomething of his own, for fear of being ſilent. One may eaſily conclude from ſuch a Conduct, that Babblers are extreamly Curious and Inquiſitive, and that they never fail to amplify what they have been told.

MAX-

MAXIM VIII.

A Babbler is ſo buſy with Talking, that he forgets to Act.

REFLECTION.

OBſerve a great Talker in Company; he has much ado to leave it, becauſe he can't give over ſpeaking: His Foot-Man, his Valet de Chambre, his Clark, his Steward, his Caſh-keeper come one after another to repreſent to him the neceſſity of putting an end to his Diſcourſe, to go about his moſt important affairs: No Body can ſtop his Mouth; and if he goes away, 'tis only when he perceives, that thoſe, whom he has tired with his long talk, are diſpoſed to leave him; which he does ſeldom perceive, for whilſt any Body ſeems to hearken to him, he fancies they are very willing he ſhould go on, which he is ſure to do. At laſt he comes home, and never falls in earneſt to his Buſineſs, but when there is no Body he can ſpeak to. His Tongue is his Helm, his *Primum Mobile*, his Chief ſpring: One wou'd fancy that he neither thinks, nor acts, nor walks but in order to ſpeak, and that if he was not allowed to ſpeak, he wou'd neither walk, nor think, nor act, if it were poſſible.

MAX-

MAXIM IX.

They who think little, ſpeak a great deal.

REFLECTION.

IF Men wou'd uſe themſelves to Think, they wou'd certainly mend their Faults in a great meaſure; for Thinking inables us to know better every thing that is amiſs, to diſcover the principles thereof, to ſee its Conſequences, to apprehend the dangers that may attend it, and to find out the way of avoiding them. If a Babbler wou'd take time to think, he wou'd diſcover the Principle and Cauſe of his great Talk, that is, an inordinate Love of himſelf, or an intolerable preſumption. For if he was not ſo ſelf-conceited, or if he did not fancy that it is impoſſible for him to be unacceptable to any Body, he wou'd not certainly ſpeak ſo much. If a Babbler wou'd think, he wou'd ſee the Conſequences of his great Talk, I mean the trouble he gives to others, the time he loſes, the Contempt which he lies under, and the many Jeſts that are made of him. If a Babbler wou'd think, he wou'd apprehend the dangers into which he runs himſelf by his Indiſcretion with reſpect to his own Affairs, and by his unfaithfulneſs with reſpect to the concerns of other Men,

Men, which he has been truſted with. If a Babbler wou'd think, he wou'd learn how to avoid thoſe dangers, thoſe Raileries and that contempt; and in order to it, he wou'd never ſpeak when there is no reaſon for it; he wou'd not be over-haſty in anſwering the Queſtions that are ask'd him; he wou'd be leſs eager ſtill to anſwer for another; he wou'd now and then forbear making ſuch Diſcourſes as are moſt pleaſing to him, to avoid giving frequent occcaſions of beſtowing praiſes upon him, which might fill him with Joy; leſt Joy, which is commonly Talkative, ſhou'd make him ſo too: He wou'd likewiſe ſhun the occaſions which might prompt him to ſpeak much; he wou'd converſe as much as ever he cou'd with Men, whoſe Authority wou'd inſpire into him Silence and Modeſty; he wou'd always ask himſelf theſe Queſtions, before he ſpeaks: *Shall I receive no prejudice by what I have a mind to ſay? Will it be uſeful or acceptable to thoſe who ſhall hear it?* To conclude, the more he'll think, the better he will know what he ought to do; and the more he Acts according to that Knowledge, the leſs danger he will run.

THE

III. *The Silent Man.*

MAXIM I.

They, who ſpeak little, don't want many Precepts.

REFLECTION.

IF we conſider that moſt Laws and Precepts are given us for the Regulation of our Conduct in the Commerce of the World, and that Words are often the cauſe of a diſorderly Conduct, it will be found that the leſs we ſpeak, the leſs we ſtand in need of thoſe Laws and Precepts. Silence inables us to be attentive to our Duty, and to perform it; whereas the Diſtraction, which ariſes from too many Words, does very much contribute to make us forget it. They who reſolve to keep Silence, when there is a juſt occaſion for it, impoſe a judicious Law to themſelves. There are ſome Obligations ſo natural and ſo agreeable to Reaſon, that they may be eaſily known by thoſe, who had rather think than ſpeak.

MAXIM II.

A Man ought to ſpeak to himſelf, before he ſpeaks to others.

REFLECTION.

When we ſpeak to others without a previous Silence, to think of what we are to ſay to them, we run a great hazard of repenting of it. How often does it happen, that when a Converſation is over, we chide our ſelves for the faults we have commited therein, for want of thinking? Then a Man finds that he has a great deal more Wit than he ſhewed when he ſpoke; becauſe after he has ſpoken to others without any previous attention, he ſpeaks to himſelf, having his Mind taken up with the Reflections which he ſhou'd have made. In the mean time he leaves behind him an ill opinion of him, which will laſt for a long time; for tho' Words paſs away very faſt, yet they make ſuch Impreſſions as cannot be eaſily defac'd, becauſe moſt Men being extremely jealous of their Merit, are glad to find ſome Faults in thoſe, who might with ſome pretence of Reaſon contend with them for it. I find it certainly better for me to ſpeak much to my ſelf, than to ſpeak much to others. If I ſpeak much to others, I ſhall at moſt give ſome marks of capacity, tho' perhaps I have none: But if I ſpeak

ſpeak to my ſelf for my Inſtruction, I ſhall acquire the capacity which great Talkers are deſirous to ſhew, and which they ſeldom have; for great Talkers are not commonly Men of great Parts.

MAXIM III.

A Word ſpoken unſeaſonably, may be of a moſt dangerous conſequence.

REFLECTION.

SIlence is therefore of great uſe to any Man, becauſe he takes time to ſay nothing but what is proper to be ſaid. I make ſometimes this remonſtrance to my ſelf: "If I ſhou'd ſay ſuch a thing to any "one, I ſhou'd certainly bring my ſelf into "great trouble; nevertheleſs, I might ea-"ſily let it fall, ſhou'd I ſpeak without any "attention, for a dangerous word may be "eaſily ſpoken, and ſuch a word wou'd "be enough to undo me. It is therefore a "thing of great conſequence to me, to "think well of what I am going to ſay.

MAXIM IV.

Tho' a Man ſpeaks little, yet he may make a great Figure in Converſation.

REFLECTION.

A Learned Man, who ſpeaks little, will be accounted more Learned than he really is; becauſe, being Learned, and ſpeaking little, and the little he ſays being worth hearing, they who hear him, will be apt to think that he is able to ſay better things ſtill. Such a Silence is reſpected by them, in proportion to the eſteem they have for him. For the ſame reaſon, when a Man, who is accounted a great Politician, ſpeaks little, he is reſpected by his Inferiours as a myſterious Man; he is admired by his Superiours as a Man of a conſummated Prudence; he is look'd upon by his Maſter, as a Man, who can be truſted with the moſt important Secrets, without any danger; he is eſteem'd by his Friends, as a Man of a wonderful Diſcretion: Laſtly, he is fear'd by his Enemies, becauſe they fancy that he is like the Sun, which hides it ſelf, whilſt it is gathering the Clouds, I mean, that his Silence ſhews that he is contriving ſome deſign to deſtroy them, which is ſo much the more dangerous, becauſe it does not appear. It muſt be confeſs'd, that very often the leſs we

we ſpeak, the greater Reputation we acquire. A Man, who ſpeaks little, but to the purpoſe, may be eſteem'd with an indifferent Merit. Silence is a kind of an Ornament to Speech itſelf, as Shadows to Colours in Painting, and Pauſes to a Conſort of Muſick.

MAXIM V.

Words ought to be like Gold, which is of great Value, tho' of a ſmall Bulk.

REFLECTION.

IDle and needleſs Words are proper to trifling Men; a ſolid Man has always in view the eſſential part of a thing, and ſays nothing that is ſuperfluous: He values nothing but what is true and good, nothing elſe can move him, and therefore he will not loſe his time about any vain and contemptible Subject, as great Talkers uſe to do: Becauſe he does not love ſpeaking, he ſpeaks as rarely as he can; and when he is obliged to it, he ſays more Things than Words: His Forehead, his Eyes, his Face ſupply the ſcarcity of his Words; there is nothing in him that ſpeaks ſo little as his Tongue; his Domeſticks read upon his Forehead, part of what he requires of 'em; his ſpeaking little, does very much contri-

bute to make him well obey'd; one wou'd think that his Servants look upon the few words he ſpeaks, as ſo many Oracles, which they hear with great reſpect, and obey with great diligence.

MAXIM VI.

The plaineſt Man, if he knows how to be ſilent, may deceive the moſt cunning Man.

REFLECTION.

CUnning and Artificial Men do not commonly miſtruſt thoſe in whom they pereeive ſome ſimplicity, and therefore they don't think themſelves obliged to ſtand upon their Guard: But when a plain Man knows how to be Silent, his attentive Silence may afford him the means of ſurprizing the moſt Artificial Men, if he has a mind to do it. A Silent Simplicity is ſometimes as good as a Speaking Craftineſs.

MAXIM VII.

A Silent Man is only to be eſteemed, when his Silence is ſeaſonable.

REFLECTION.

A Man may be Silent out of Dulneſs, Weakneſs, want of Politeneſs, or Pride: Such a Silence ought not to be imitated, and does not deſerve the approbation of Wiſe Men. To read a Book whilſt others ſpeak, to affect not to hearken to what they ſay, to look out of a Window in time of Converſation, all thoſe things expoſe a Man to the contempt of the Company; becauſe they may with great reaſon believe that he deſpiſes them, or if they have no reaſon to ſuſpect it, he muſt at leaſt be charged with Stupidity and want of Politeneſs.

IV. *The Witty Man.*

MAXIM I.

A Witty and Satyrical Saying is enough to ſpoil the Merit of the beſt Work, and the Reputation of the moſt Honeſt Men.

REFLECTION.

A Witty and Satyrical Saying againſt a Man, or a Work, pleaſes thoſe that hear it; firſt, becauſe it is a Witty Saying, and then becauſe it is Satyrical; for Men are naturally better pleaſed to ſee others Criticized than to ſee themſelves praiſed: Such a pleaſing ſaying will not be forgotten, it will be tranſmitted by one Generation to another, as it appears by the many Witty ſayings of the Ancients; the Collections whereof are ſtill extant. From whence it follows, that they, who never ſaw that Man, or that Work, and ſhall never ſee them, do notwithſtanding deſpiſe 'em, and think 'em to be as imperfect as if they had ſeen many defects in them with their own Eyes. Perhaps He, who ſpoke thoſe Witty words, did it rather to ſhew his Wit, than out of any ill deſign, or out of Love for Truth; nevertheleſs, becauſe thoſe words remain, and the Man, or the Work is not known,

known, Men will be prepoſſeſt againſt 'em. Hence is is that a Work can hardly recover of a fall cauſed by ſome Witty and Satyrical Words, (our time affords ſeveral Inſtances of it,) and that a Nick-Name ſticks ſo ſtrongly to a Man, that he and his whole Poſteritty will be known by it. The World affords every Day ſeveral Inſtances of what I ſay.

MAXIM II.

The Salt of Witty Sayings is the Seaſoning of a Converſation, and makes it agreeable.

REFLECTION.

BUt ſuch a Salt muſt not be thrown by handfuls, as 'tis practiſed by thoſe who fancy that the only part they ought to act in Company, is that of a Merry Witty Man. There are others of a different Character; a Man wou'd think that he reads a Book when he hears them ſpeak, becauſe they are only for telling the Witty ſayings of other Men, tho' they be never ſo Old and Obſolete. Thoſe Witty things are like Plate, when it comes to be ſold, one muſt loſe the making; for when they are repeated, the thing which occaſioned them is always wanting; hence it is that they are commonly but coldly received. A Witty Saying out of its firſt place is like a Diamond out of its Inchaſing, or like a Tennis-Ball thrown

thrown at a ſecond Rebound; they loſe a great deal of their Force and Beauty.

MAXIM III.

A Man may bring himſelf into trouble for having ſaid a Witty thing.

REFLECTION.

I Love well enough to tell a Witty thing, but tho' I be never ſo well pleaſed with it, I uſe ſome precautions before I let it go: When a Witty Thought comes into my Mind, I do carefully examine it, I conſider what may be the conſequences of it, and at laſt I tell it, if I think I ſhall rather pleaſe, than offend any Body: This is the right way to avoid bringing one ſelf into trouble: Thus a Man will not loſe a ſolid thing to have the reputation of a Witty Man. What a ſtrange Blindneſs is it, to do one ſelf ſo much wrong for ſo vain a Pleaſure! For they who hear a Witty thing, will often laugh, without having any eſteem for the perſon who told it; the Salt of a Witty thing tickles their Taſte, but they don't mind the Man who ſpeaks it.

MAX-

MAXIM IV.

The more a Man loves to be Witty, the more he is vexed, when others are not affected with what he ſays.

REFLECTION.

A Man, who makes it his Buſineſs to appear Witty, is ſtrangely confounded to ſee every Body keep a ſerious Countenance, when he expected they ſhou'd Laugh. Which happens very often; for Men are very willing to appear Serious, when any Body pretends to have the power to take 'em off from their Gravity. Say a Witty thing, but do it without any affectation, and ſo as it may not appear that you are ſenſible of it: Be ſure not to applaud your ſelf for it; for if you prevent 'em, they'll never applaud you: Let 'em find out your Wit, and reliſh it.

MAXIM V.

A Man does often run the hazard of loſing a Witty Saying, when he gives it as his own.

REFLECTION.

I Have often obſerv'd it, ſome Men are ſo Envious, and ſo Jealous, that the Merit of a Man, when preſent, can never pleaſe

pleaſe them; they'll never own that any Body has a true Merit, unleſs he be abſent; for his preſence wou'd alarm them, and raiſe their Envy and Jealouſy.

V. *The Droll.*

MAXIM. I.

Drolleries are good for nothing, when a Man values them too much, and they are only good, when he does not pretend that they are ſo.

REFLECTION.

WHoever will pleaſe by ſuch things, muſt not value them more than they are worth, but look upon 'em as falſe Thoughts and odd Expreſſions, which ſurprizing the Mind, may afford it ſome pleaſure: Beſides, there ought to be ſome Affinity between thoſe, who make uſe of thoſe Thoughts and Expreſſions, and thoſe who hear 'em; for there are ſome Men, whom it does not become at all to hear 'em, and others, whom it becomes leſs ſtill to uſe them. He that is above others, debaſes himſelf, when he has got a Habit of ridiculing thoſe that are beneath him. Such a Habit is chiefly unworthy of thoſe, who by their Elevation or Miniſtry, are obliged to

to put on a Grave Countenance, it is a ſtain, which ſpoils the greateſt Virtues, and cannot be taken off by Heroiſm itſelf: Every thing ought to be Great in thoſe Men, ſuch a Meanneſs cannot be born in them.

MAXIM II.

They, who make others Laugh, are ſeldom eſteem'd.

REFLECTION.

IT is ſaid likewiſe, that they who make Jeſting their Buſineſs, are like Players, who are very much applauded, tho' they are little eſteem'd: They are as much deſpiſed, as they make others laugh, eſpecially when they make People laugh by their Drolleries; for there is nothing ſo contemptible as that ſort of Jeſting. I love Drolling ſometimes, when I think it neceſſary to keep up a Converſation that ſeems to fall, and to revive it, when it is like to die, and when I don't run the hazard of being accounted a profeſt Jeſter. My Jeſting does not hinder me from putting on again a Serious Countenance, when I think it fit, becauſe I Jeſt by Reaſon, and not out of Inclination, or out of an ill Habit.

VI. *The Jesting Man.*

MAXIM. I.

Avoid Jesting, as a Snare, which your Mind lays to your Tranquility.

REFLECTION.

WHatever Thought, tho' never so agreeable, and whatever turn of Expression, tho' never so ingenious, comes into my mind, to put forth a Jest, I never let it go, but when I am sure that the Person, whom I aim at, will be the first that shall be pleased with it: And because such a thing happens very seldom, 'tis also but seldom that I Jest. If a Man forbears Jesting, because he knows not how to Jest, I praise him for his Prudence; if a Man forbears Jesting, tho' he knows how to Jest, I praise him for his Wisdom. No Body is liable to censure for not Jesting; but one may be censured for doing it. Jesting does sometimes keep up a Conversation, but it does commonly divide the Jesters. The more a Man Jests, the fewer Friends he has, and the fewer Friends he has, the more Obstacles he meets with in the course of his Fortune. Tho' *Scipio* was in great esteem at *Rome*, tho' he had a great party

in

in it, yet he could never obtain the Office of an *Ædile*; becauſe, having perceived that one of his Competitors had got ſome Callofities in his Hands, with much Plowing, he ask'd him in jeſt, whether he walked upon his Hands.

MAXIM II.

A profeſt Jeerer, will ſeldom bear a Jeſt.

REFLECTION.

I Believe that the Reaſon of it is, becauſe they have found out by much jeering others, that Jeſting is very pernicious to thoſe that are the Objects of it. In effect, we ſee every day, that of all Men, none will leſs take a Jeſt than a Jeſting Man. They who jeer others, even wittily, look moſt wretchedly when they are jeered, and when they happen to be in ſerious and grave Converſations, where they are not allowed to exerciſe their Jeſting Humour; inſtead of ſpeaking they do nothing but gape, or if they ſpeak, they do it ſo tediouſly, that they make others gape.

MAX-

MAXIM III.

Every Jeſt is an Injury to ſome Men.

REFLECTION.

SOme are ſo very ſenſible and nice, that they can't be touch'd without being hurt; one muſt be very cautious with ſuch Men in Converſation: They are always offended at a Jeſt: Their ill Humour finds, or rather produces ſome Bitterneſs in the Sweetneſs of the Praiſes beſtowed upon them: Being very Bitter, they find that every thing taſtes like Gall. I will know a Man before I jeer him: It is a neceſſary precaution, that a merry Jeſt may not turn into a perfect Quarrel; and therefore I never uſe to jeſt upon ruſtical ſevere or moroſe Men. I obſerve this Rule, when any Body jeers me: If the Jeſt runs upon trifles, I laugh with the Jeſters; If the Jeſt is injurious to me, and put upon me deſignedly, I am contented to ſhew that I know and feel it, to ſtop the courſe of it. If they go on, I behave my ſelf towards 'em as I do towards ſlandering Men; I endeavour to be the better for it, either by reforming my ſelf, if I deſerve to be rail'd at, or by uſing my ſelf to be patient, if I don't deſerve it.

MAX-

MAXIM IV.

A Man given to Jeſting, ought to have as much regard to his hearers, as to thoſe whom he jeers.

REFLECTION.

A Man ought to know not only thoſe whom he deſigns to rally, but alſo thoſe who are preſent. I have often abſtained from jeering *N*-----about his Vivacity, tho' he gave me occaſion for it; becauſe *M*-----wou'd have taken him for a Blunderer, if I had done it. Shou'd I jeer a Man about his good Husbandry in the preſence of certain Perſons, they wou'd look upon him as a very covetous Man: If you jeſt upon theOſtentation of a Probity, which ſeems to be affected, they will be apt to think that the Man you jeſt upon, does not much care to have a true Probity.

MAXIM V.

No Man will Jeer his Friend, if he looks upon him as one half of himſelf.

REFLECTION.

BEcauſe Men do naturally hate to be jeered. If I jeſt upon my Friend with

reaſon, I do him wrong; or elſe I wrong my ſelf at leaſt as much as him. Friendſhip ſhou'd always be attended with a priviledge againſt Jeſting. Friends who do often jeer one another, begin to fear and ſhun one another, then they fall out, and at laſt become Enemies.

MAXIM VI.

It is as ſhameful a thing for a Superiour to jeer his Inferiour, as it is for a Man well arm'd to attack a Man, who having no Arms cannot defend himſelf.

REFLECTION.

IT does not become at all thoſe who are raiſed above others, to jeſt upon thoſe that are beneath them; they get no glory by it: How cou'd it be glorious for them to attack in ſuch a manner thoſe that depend on 'em, who, out of fear and reſpect, dare not ſo much as to complain of it? It is therefore no leſs cruel than ſhameful a thing, for Great Men to jeſt upon the Little ones, becauſe a Dart will make a deeper wound, if thrown from a high place, and becauſe their Dignity, joyned with the Malignity and flattering approbation of thoſe who hear them, will poyſon thoſe wounds ſo as to make 'em almoſt incurable.

MAX-

MAXIM VII.

When a Man jeſts upon Religion, 'tis a great Sign he has none.

REFLECTION.

The deſign of jeſting is chiefly to ſhew in a ſharp and ingenious way the ridiculouſneſs of ſome Men, or to make 'em appear ridiculous when they are not ſo. If it be ſo, how can any one perſwade himſelf that a Man has any Religion, when he makes a jeſt of it? There is nothing that deſerves ſo much our reſpect and veneration as Religion: But can we be ſaid to reſpect it, if we jeſt upon it, and by that means expoſe it to the Contempt of other Men? There are things enough in the World, that deſerve to be laught at; why ſhou'd we therefore make ſo bold with Religion? Its Greatneſs ought to make us ſenſible of our Meanneſs, its Authority requires our Obedience, and its Holineſs and Purity ſhou'd make us tremble, whenever we think of throwing the Darts of our raſh cenſures upon it. Certainly we wou'd never jeſt upon Religion, if we were fully perſwaded of its Truths, and exact obſervers of its Precepts. It is the Rule of all our Duties: If we laugh at it, how ſhall we perform thoſe Duties? For it is almoſt impoſſible that we ſhou'd live according to a Rule, which we think de-

ſerves to be laught at. Religion is too ſerious a thing, to make a Jeſt of it; and unreſpectful jeſting can never become Religion. No Man will ever attain to perfection, it he ridicules that which only can make him perfect.

VII. *The Diſputer.*

MAXIM I.

The Diſputes of Learned Men about Doctrines, or Matters of Fact, will frequently turn into Perſonal Quarrels.

REFLECTION.

WHen Men Diſpute they are firſt angry with Arguments, and then with Men: They make a great noiſe, they give hard Words, they cauſe a great diſturbance, they fly out into a Paſſion: I have known ſome, whoſe ſtrongeſt Arguments lay in the ſtrength of their Lungs. "Our Diſputes, "(ſays *Montagne*) ſhou'd be forbidden "and puniſhed, as other Verbal Crimes: "How many Vices do they not ſtir, "and heap up, being always Ruled "and Commanded by Anger? It is "a ſilly thing to make a Fight of a Sport.

How

How many Errors have been introduced into Religion by Diſputes! How many offences againſt Charity! How many doubts into the Minds of Men! At firſt the love of Truth ſeems to occaſion a Diſpute, afterwards Pride keeps it up, and at laſt Anger puts an end to it. "Every time a Man "meets with any oppoſition in a Diſpute, "he does not conſider whether it be right "or wrong, but only what defence he ſhall "make; he makes uſe of Claws inſtead of "Arms. *(Mont. l. 3.)* As for me, I am never offended, when any Body contradicts my Judgement; it makes no alteration in me. "Contradictions do but quicken my "Spirits, and exerciſe me: They raiſe my "Attention, and not my Anger. *(ibid,)* It happens ſo often that I am contrary to my ſelf, that I eaſily uſe my ſelf to be contradicted by others. "My Imagina-"tion contradicts and condemns it ſelf "ſo often, that it is all one to me whe-"ther another Man does it. *(ibid.)* Why ſhou'd I abuſe thoſe who are of a different opinion from me? Have they not the ſame Liberty that I have, to tell their mind? Is the Queſtion about them or me in that Diſpute? Shall I make my Arguments ſtronger with hard words? Shall I bring them over to my opinion, if I inſult 'em? Will ill words and inſults open a ſafer way for me to find out Truth, which I ought to look for in a Diſpute?

MAXIM II.

Never Diſpute with a deſign to contradict others, but to inſtruct your ſelf.

REFLECTION.

I Never oppoſe another Man's opinion, but in order to bring him over to Truth; before I oppoſe him, I examine whether I have a ſufficient Authority and Capacity, and the other neceſſary qualifications to get the Victory: But becauſe I don't eaſily flatter my ſelf that I have 'em, I ſeldom diſpute with any Body; or if I do it, it is ſoon done, and in a few words. Diſputes would be managed with more Calmneſs and Prudence, if that Rule was carefully obſerved; they wou'd be more uſeful, and Truth wou'd not be ſo much ſlighted as it is. By the uſual way of Diſputing, one wou'd think that Men learn to diſpute, only to excel in the Art of contradicting others: They are not fond of Truth, but of their own oppinions, whatever they be. When the Diſpute is over, they are of the ſame mind as they were before: They only think upon the Arguments they made uſe of, and ſhut their Eyes againſt thoſe that were alledg'd againſt 'em. What Injuſtice! What Infatuation! What a fondneſs of one's opinions!

If I perſiſt to contradict any Body, he'll be apt to think that I fancy I have better parts

parts than he; that is not my deſign, and therefore I don't perſiſt in it: I favour, as much as I can, the opinions of other Men; I am glad when I can approve them: Nay, I am willing to fancy that they may be true, becauſe they are approved by ſome: I can bear to be contradicted: If I don't approve my own opinions as much as others deſire I ſhou'd, 'tis becauſe I think they don't deſerve an entire approbation; for I have a better opinion of others than of my ſelf, and I think it very ridiculous to diſpute for Diſputes ſake.

Laſtly, if I diſpute, I do it only to clear the Truth, and not to get the Victory: and therefore I take all poſſible care not to imitate thoſe, who perplex the ſubject in queſtion, with Preambles and tedious Expreſſions, who make long Excurſions, and go ſo much about, that one may eaſily perceive they are rather for intangling the matter than for proving it. When I advance a propoſition, which I have reaſon to believe to be true; if it be rejected as falſe, I ſpeak thus to my ſelf: "Perhaps 'tis my "own fault; perhaps I don't expreſs my "ſelf well, I don't ſpeak to the purpoſe, I "am too haughty, or they have not reaſon "enough to have a great eſteem for me, "and therefore 'tis no wonder if they don't "believe me. Thus I don't pretend at all times that others are in the wrong, when they contradict me: Thus being not over fond of my own Reaſons, I am better diſ-

poſed to hear theirs. There is nothing finer than to yield to Truth, when we perceive it, and to imbrace it earneſtly, when we have unjuſtly departed from it. "To change "one's mind, to mend one's ſelf, and to a-"bandon an ill party, are rare, noble and "philoſophical Qualities. (*Mont.* l. 4.) A Man may know thereby the force of his Mind, and the power he has over himſelf: it will appear that he is not over-ruled by his prejudices, and that he is perſwaded that nothing can be more noble than to yield to Reaſon. *Non eſt levitas à cognito & damnato errore diſcedere.* Senec. *de Benef.* l. 4. c. 38.

MAXIM III.

Never make a trifling thing the Subject of a great Diſpute.

REFLECTION.

I never contend with any Body about frivolous and trifling things; for I have often obſerved, that a meer trifle will deprive Men of the Pleaſure and Advantage of Converſation; becauſe it makes 'em hot, and keeps 'em from diſcourſing of more uſeful and more neceſſary things. Diſputing will make ſome indifferent things very conſiderable by their conſequences. But above all things never diſpute with great Men about

bout Trifles: Whoever gets the Victory over them, will be ſure to loſe it. They are much above you, and therefore they will ſoon depreſs you in ſome material things, to make amends for the trouble you give 'em, by ſurpaſſing them in ſome indifferent things. Whoever croſſes the great inclination they have to diſtinguiſh themſelves every where, exaſperates and alarms them; they have always a ſufficient Power ready to oppreſs thoſe who reſiſt them. "I never diſpute with a Prince who has "four and twenty Legions at his command, ſaid a Philoſopher to the Emperor *Hadrian.* Great Men are commonly very fond of their opinions, and maintain them with Obſtinacy; becauſe they, who approach 'em, dare not contradict 'em, by Reaſon of their Riches, Authority, and Power; ſo that being accuſtomed to continual applauſes, they think that they are always in the right. I pity thoſe, who, being in Proſperity, will hear nothing but what flatters 'em; becauſe they never know the Beauty of Truth and Reaſon.

MAX-

MAXIM IV.

The Reaſon why Diſputes do commonly laſt a long time, is, becauſe the Diſputants are a long time without underſtanding one another.

REFLECTION.

EVery Body is ſo full of his own Thoughts, and ſo fond of his own Arguments, that he has much ado to hear with any attention the Reaſons of other Men. How many Diſputes there are in the World, becauſe Men do not, or will not underſtand one another! "He that will "not underſtand what is ſaid to him, does "no more perceive what is propoſed to "him, ſo far he is engaged in his Courſe, "and does not think of following you, but "himſelf. This want of attention on both ſides, is the reaſon why a Man does not anſwer well the Objections of his Adverſary; the latter thinks himſelf obliged to enlarge upon 'em, in hopes of making them more intelligible: The former, who is rather for objecting than for anſwering, is not very well underſtood by the latter, who has not been more attentive than he: So that after much time, they are not better inſtructed when the Diſpute is over, than they were when it begun: Laſtly, each of them goes home more fond of his Opinion than he was before, for he thinks it may be the better maintained, becauſe he maintained it a long while.

MAX-

MAXIM V.

Some Men in their Diſputes, meaſure the worth of their Arguments by the Number and Weight of their Words.

REFLECTION.

THey think to drown their Adverſaries in the Flux of their Words, or at leaſt to overthrow them by the Weight of their Pronunciation. Such things may deceive thoſe, who, wanting ſtrength, ſuffer themſelves to be ſurprized and carried away by any thing that puts 'em in motion. "Methinks that Implication and In-"termingling of Words whereby they urge "us, are like the Tricks of Jugglers: Their "nimbleneſs forces our Senſes, but ſhakes "not our Belief in the leaſt: Abating their "Juggling Tricks, they do nothing but "what is common and mean. (*Montagne.*) I hear that ſort of Diſputants, as I hear the long Train of Words, or the Pedantical Pronounciation of the Doctor on the Stage; they divert me, but they make no other Impreſſion upon me.

MAX-

MAXIM VI.

Silence is not always a Sign of Diſcretion in a Diſpute.

REFLECTION.

THe Man mention'd by *Montagne* l. 3. may be an Example of it: "He re-"ſolves to be ſilent in the heat of a Diſpute, "out of a Spiteful Ignorance, affecting "a proud contempt, or a modeſt, but foo-"liſh ſhunning of Contention. Vanity will never loſe any thing, it will indemnify it ſelf as much as is poſſible: A Man knows not what to anſwer, it is a mortifying thing; but then he'll be ſilent, to make others believe that he does not vouchſafe to ſpeak, or that there is nothing more convincing that can be added to what he ſaid; and ſo he hopes to give no advantage over him to his Adverſaries. But whilſt he pleaſes himſelf thus in private, he does not avoid being criticized or jeſted upon, becauſe every Body knows the true motive, which obliges him to let go his hold. I wonder how any Man can deceive himſelf in that manner, ſeeing a little attention will eaſily inable him to diſcover ſuch a motive. Does he pretend to ſurpaſs all others in penetration? But when I reflect upon the blindneſs, which does often proceed from ſelf-love, I give over wondering at it.

it. As for me, when any one attacks my Opinions with ſuch Arguments as I cannot anſwer, I do ſincerely own my Ignorance: Nevertheleſs I don't believe always that my Adverſary is in the right, tho' he preſſes me ſo hard, becauſe I conſider that a Man of better parts might perhaps anſwer him. I am not in ſuſpence out of Obſtinacy, but out of Reaſon, and a ſincere love for Truth, and becauſe I will not have Ignorance to be the Rule of my Belief.

MAXIM VII.

We are not commonly ſo much diſpleaſed with the Opinions of other Men, as we are with their paſſionate, preſumptuous, haughty and obſtinate manner of maintaining them.

REFLECTION.

I Am very willing to hear a Man, who makes only uſe of Arguments to convince me of his Opinion; but if he pretends to ſtrengthen them by ſome paſſionate Demonſtrations, he ſtirs me againſt him, I begin to miſtruſt him, which will, perhaps, hinder me from perceiving the whole ſtrength of his Arguments. Men are ſo unwilling to be thwarted in their Opinions, that there is no need to make 'em more uneaſy ſtill by the manner of doing it. Whoever undertakes to humble and mor-

mortify a Man, will find it very difficult to get his approbation.

MAXIM VIII.

A Man ought to be very ſure of a Fact, before he diſputes about the Manner of it, or its Nature, and Properties.

REFLECTION.

I Place Diſputes about uncertain Matters of Fact amongſt the trifling Diſputes I have already mention'd, for they are all equally needleſs. But perhaps it will be ſaid, "That the more a Man diſputes about "any Subject, whatever it be, the more he "cultivates his Mind. To which I add, that he'll be the more Contentious and Contradicting. Alas! Let us be contented with ſuch Diſputes as will inſtruct us in Neceſſary things: The little Knowledge we have of Truth, affords us many occaſions for it. But it will be further ſaid, "Your Reflecti-"on is as needleſs, as you pretend that thoſe "Diſputes are; for there are too many Men, "whoſe Intereſt 'tis to Diſpute, and to teach "others how to Diſpute in vain. Well, if my Reflection is of no uſe to the Publick, I ſhall be contented to make it uſeful to my ſelf, by forbearing to Diſpute, except it be to take and maintain the Party of Truth and

and Reaſon, in ſuch things as are worthy of Reaſon and Truth. *Montagne* (l. 3. c. 11.) ſpeaks agreeably of thoſe needleſs diſputes in this manner: "I was thinking now, as "I do often, of Humane Reaſon, how it "is a free and looſe Inſtrument. I obſerve "that Men, when any Matters of Fact are "propoſed to them, will ſooner enquire in-"to the Reaſons, than into the Truth of "'em; they paſs over the Suppoſitions, but "they do curiouſly examine the Conſe-"quences; they leave the Things, and run "to their Cauſes. A pretty ſort of prattling "Men! they commonly begin thus: How "is it done? But, they ſhou'd ſay, is "there any ſuch thing? I find that we "ſhou'd ſay moſt times, there is no ſuch "thing, and I would often uſe that Anſwer, "but I dare not; for they cry out, that it "is a ſhift which proceeds from weakneſs "and ignorance, ſo that I am obliged to play "the Juggler for Company ſake, and to "diſcourſe of frivolous Matters, which I "don't believe at all. Beſides, it muſt be "confeſt, that it wou'd be a rude thing to "deny flatly a Matter of Fact, eſpecially "if we conſider that moſt Men will affirm "that they have ſeen ſuch a thing, tho it "be never ſo difficult to believe, or alledge "ſome Witneſſes, whom we dare not con-"tradict. According to this cuſtom we "know the Grounds and Means of a thou-"ſand things, which did never exiſt. There are ſo many real things, the ſtudy where-

of

of may be uſeful to us, that we can never too much blame thoſe who ſpend their time in ſearching the Reaſons of things that have no exiſtence, and who divert the force of their minds to the prejudice of Truth. It were much better to maintain, that thoſe Facts are meer Fables, than to reaſon about 'em.

VIII. *The Opiniater.*

MAXIM I.

An Opiniater does not yield, becauſe he is reſolv'd never to yield.

REFLECTION.

AN Opiniater does not always remain obſtinate for want of knowing that he is in the wrong, but becauſe he is reſolved to be obſtinate. The only way to lead him to the knowledge of Truth, is, to make him fancy that he has found it without the help of any Body. They that go by the name of Opiniaters, muſt be dealt with, with great Prudence: They hate all manner of reſiſtance; they are naturally ſtubborn, refractory to Truth, and obſtinately bent againſt Reaſon; they are ſo conceited of themſelves, that they never ask any Body's

Body's Advice. If any one ſhou'd adviſe 'em to any thing which they are reſolved to do, they change their Reſolution, becauſe they will not be directed by any Body but themſelves. They never confeſs that they were miſtaken: And therefore there are no Men leſs capable of attaining to any Perfection. One may with great Reaſon deſpair of thoſe who will not hearken to Truth. I have not ſo good an Opinion of my ſelf, and I am not ſo fond of the eſteem of other Men, as to ſuffer my ſelf to be thus governed by Obſtinacy; for an Opiniater fancies that he is a Man of a great Merit, or wou'd make others believe it.

MAXIM II.

The beſt way to deal with an Opiniater, is to be ſilent.

REFLECTION.

WHen an Opiniater diſputes againſt me, I chooſe to be ſilent; becauſe I have learn'd by Experience, that Men of ſuch a Character will never acknowledge Truth, when they have begun to oppoſe it. I am perſwaded, that my Silence will work more upon him than my Reſiſtance: If I ſay nothing to him, I ſhall give him time

to yield to Reaſon: If I oppoſe him, I ſhall afford him Matter to exerciſe his Obſtinacy.

IX. *The Heedleſs and Inconſiderate Man.*

MAXIM I.

Inconſiderateneſs is the cauſe of moſt Faults, that are committed in the Commerce of the World.

REFLECTION.

BEcauſe an Inconſiderate Man is a Man without Attention, that is to ſay, a Man who wants what is abſolutely neceſſary to him for the Conduct of his Life. An Inconſiderate Man, is chiefly known by his Diſcourſe: He ſpeaks without conſidering what he ſays, and without penetrating into the conſequences of it. Therefore when he recollects himſelf after a Converſation, he is aſhamed of all the raſh and improper things he has ſaid, for want of attention. Old Men, who are commonly more attentive, will often rake into their Youth, and remember thoſe things with ſorrow. The more a Man is attentive, the leſs inconſiderate he will be.

MAX-

MAXIM II.

A heedleſs Man ſpeaks and hears wrong.

REFLECTION.

A heedleſs Man hears only by halves what is ſaid to him, and ſo his Anſwer to one part of it makes a perfect Nonſenſe. This want of attention, is often the cauſe of ſo many falſe Stories, which ſpread themſelves in the World, and of ſo many falſe Reports, which occaſion great Diſorders; becauſe the heedleſs Man ſupplies by his Invention, what he did not hear, for want of Attention. He has heard ſome particulars of a Fact, and he will relate 'em out of Inconſiderateneſs; but becauſe he thought of ſomething elſe, when the eſſential Circumſtances of that Fact were related to him, he relates inſtead of 'em, thoſe that come into his mind; becauſe he has inconſiderately begun his Diſcourſe, without much caring whether he was well informed of what he had a mind to ſay. I cannot rely upon a heedleſs and inconſiderate Man. It is true, that ſome of 'em are Equitable, Honeſt, and Religious Men; but their want of attention may ſpoil their moſt excellent Qualities: Tho' they deſign no harm, they may do miſchief by their heedleſs and unſeaſonable Words. Don't we ſee very

often, that they ruin their own Affairs by ſuch an Indiſcretion? They are uncapable of any precaution, yet there is nothing more neceſſary than precaution, to avoid the Artifices and Deceits which we are ſo much expoſed to. But they prejudice others as well as themſelves; for they act and ſpeak with ſo much Inadvertency, that it is a difficult thing to be ſecure from the impetuous motions of their precipitation: They ſurpriſe others as much as they ſurpriſe themſelves. I am always uneaſy, when my Circumſtances oblige me to keep correſpondence with an Inconſiderate Man; for I run the hazard of loſing my Life, my Honour and Eſtate by him. There are two Remedies which he might make uſe of againſt ſuch diſorders. The firſt, ſincerely to acknowledge that he is a heedleſs inconſiderate Man; ſuch an acknowledgment wou'd diſpoſe him to be more attentive, and to uſe the ſecond Remedy; I mean, to obſerve other Inconſiderate Men, who fall very often into a dangerous Indiſcretion, which he may eaſily obſerve. To avoid ſpeaking inconſiderately, I uſe to make a Reflection before I ſay *Yes*, or *No*: I do carefully examine, whether it be my Duty to grant or refuſe any thing, and what can make my granting or refuſing of it good. Laſtly, I have always an Eye upon all the ſteps I make, becauſe I know that the defects of our Actions proceed from want of attention. If Men were

more

more attentive, they wou'd be leſs faulty. I converſe with my ſelf, to learn how to converſe with others. A Man muſt often deſcend into himſelf by the way of attention, if he will come out of himſelf with Honour by the way of Speech.

X. *The Complimenter.*

MAXIM I.

Compliments are authorized by Uſe; therefore every Body ought to make only as many Compliments, and ſuch as Uſe requires.

REFLECTION.

THo' I am perſwaded that Compliments are only outward Actions, wherein the Heart has often no ſhare; yet I receive and return them with Civility. It is a Ceremony eſtabliſhed by Uſe, I will not therefore be ſingular: How many Words againſt the Rules, and how many Conſtructions againſt Grammar eſtabliſhed by Uſe, which a Man muſt comply with, if he will ſpeak well! No Man ſhou'd be deceived by thoſe ceremonious Appearances; for every Body ought to know that they are meer Appearances: I confeſs, that it is a troubleſome thing to be obliged to uſe ſo many Words, which don't agree

with our Sentiments. " † What vanity " and loſs of time in Viſits, Salutations, " mutual Diſcourſes, Harangues, Ceremo- " nies, Offers, Promiſes and Praiſes! How " many Exaggerations and Lies, what Hy- " pocriſy, and Impoſture, known to every " Body, to thoſe who receive, and who " hear 'em! So that it looks as if Men were " agreed to mock at, and deceive one ano- " ther. He, who knows that another Man " tells him an impudent Lye, muſt ſay, I " thank ye; and the latter, who knows " that the other does not believe him, muſt " keep a good Countenance: They watch " one another, to know who ſhall begin, " and who ſhall end, tho' both of 'em " wou'd be glad to be gone. All thoſe things are but too true; but it is an univerſal Comedy, which every Body is obliged to Act upon the Stage of the World, when he has any part to Play in it. Oh! what a Charming Liberty wou'd it be for a Man, if he was allowed to come into a Company, and leave it without any troubleſome Ceremonies! I ſhou'd like ſuch a Liberty very well; yet I conform my ſelf to the Taſte of the Publick. I live with Men, I muſt therefore obſerve the Cuſtoms which are generally obſerved by Men. The uſe of Compliments, is a kind

† *Charron* of Wiſdom l. 1. c. 30. N. 6. of the *Paris* Edition, 1657.

of a Commerce of officious Lies, whereby few People are deceived; for few People take 'em for any thing elſe but what they are. However, no Body ought to be exceſſive in his Compliments. *Mont.* (l.1.c.13.) "I have often ſeen ſome Men, that were "Uncivil by too much Civility, and trou-"bleſome by their Courteſy. I am apt to miſtruſt a great Complimenter; becauſe I fancy that when a Man is capable of ſo much diſſembling, he is but too much diſpoſed to deceive others; unleſs we ſuppoſe that he has been ſo ill Educated as to believe, that Compliments make the Eſſential and Principal part of Politeneſs.

XI. *The Man who praiſes others.*

MAXIM I.

Praiſes are extremely ſweet and agreeable, when they are judicious.

REFLECTION.

WE muſt not praiſe others as moſt Men do, who rather praiſe thoſe that are praiſed by others, than thoſe that deſerve it. Wiſe Men don't care for ſuch

praiſes: They know that they are beſtow'd without reflection; and therefore they receive 'em without gratitude. I praiſe *D--L*----without minding what others think of him; I praiſe him only, becauſe he ſeems to me to deſerve it. I praiſe any thing, when I have a good reaſon for it: We ſhare in a good Action when we praiſe it heartily. Praiſes are ſo common and beſtowed with ſo much indiſcretion, that I cannot believe that a Man of great ſenſe will be pleaſed with them. When *N*---praiſes me, and when I reflect upon the praiſes which he beſtowed a little before upon that Great Man, who neglects all the duties of Probity and Religion, I think my ſelf rather deſpiſedand inſulted, than praiſed and applauded. I don't love to be praiſed by thoſe whom I don't think to be worthy of praiſe.

MAXIM II.

It is a ridiculous thing to praiſe a Man for ſuch things as are not properly his own.

REFLECTION

PRaiſe a Man for ſuch things as can neither be given him, nor taken from him, and which do truly belong to him; that is to ſay, praiſe him for his ſound Reaſon, his good Judgment, and his Wiſe Conduct.

duct. Man is a Reaſonable Creature; he is therefore perfect, when he is ſuch as his Nature requires he ſhou'd be: Whoever praiſes him for any thing elſe, praiſes him for that which does not belong to him, and makes him aſhamed of himſelf; becauſe ſuch praiſes ſhew that he does not think him to be worthy of praiſe upon his own account. I look upon the praiſes that are beſtowed upon me, when I don't deſerve 'em, as ſo many reproaches for wanting that which wou'd make me worthy of 'em, and as ſo many advices that are given me, to let me know that I am obliged to acquire it. Inſtead of growing vain upon the account of thoſe praiſes, I grow the better for them; I think of curing my ſelf, inſtead of flattering my illneſs.

MAXIM III.

They, who don't deſerve to be praiſed, are often ſparing of their praiſes.

REFLECTION.

BEing ſenſible that they have no Merit, they are unwilling to acknowledge the Merit of others. They look upon the praiſes which they might beſtow upon them, as ſo many reproaches to themſelves. Nevertheleſs, praiſes are an Homage which we ought to pay to Perfection; nay, it is the Intereſt of the Publick to pay ſuch an Ho-

Homage to thoſe who deſerve it, becauſe it does very much contribute to increaſe the Excellency of Arts and Sciences, raiſing the Emulation of thoſe who profeſs them. Praiſes when deſerved, inflame the Courage of a Man, which wou'd otherwiſe grow cold. Men think themſelves obliged to exert their faculties in proportion to what others expect from them; they are willing to preſerve the reputation they have got, and whilſt they endeavour to be always like themſelves, they will often ſurpaſs themſelves. I add, that a Man by much praiſing others, is in ſome manner worthy of praiſe, becauſe he pays to every one his due, and is in a diſpoſition of practiſing what he has ſo much praiſed.

MAXIM IV.

They, who praiſe Men only to pleaſe them, betray their Judgment by too much Complaiſance.

REFLECTION.

THey, who praiſe others meerly to pleaſe them, will be eaſily prepoſſeſt in favour of thoſe whom they praiſe. When the Will is reſolv'd to praiſe, it forces the Judgment to find matter for it, and then a Man betrays his Judgment by too much Complaiſance: He betrays it more ſtill, when

when he praiſes thoſe, who don't deſerve it. He ſhews himſelf as contemptible, as he wou'd make others appear worthy of eſteem; and whilſt he thinks only of pleaſing one Man, he will diſpleaſe many, for all Men in general diſapprove thoſe, who depart from Truth; and if any of them are of his Mind, it is only out of an intereſted Principle, which they don't ſincerely approve, becauſe they know that a Lie ought never to be approv'd. Tho' we attack Truth outwardly with our words, yet we pay homage to it inwardly by our Reflections. I ſhall willingly promote the Glory of other Men by my Encomiums, if any Body will have it ſo, provided I be not obliged to diſhonour my ſelf by any Lies.

MAXIM V.

Men are very willing to hear the praiſes that are beſtowed upon them; but they are very unwilling to hear the praiſes which a Man beſtows upon himſelf.

REFLECTION.

MEn are extremely willing to hear the praiſes that are beſtow'd upon 'em; for the Pleaſure, which deſerved Praiſes afford, is ſo natural, that no Man can be inſenſible to it: It is enough for him to preſerve himſelf from the ill effects of it. Don't we ſee eve-

ry

ry Day that Men venture all they have, and even their Lives to be praiſed? "O "*Athenians*! If you knew what I endure, "that I may be praiſed by you, ſaid *Alexander*. How Pleaſant and Glorious it is to be pointed at, and to hear others ſay of ones ſelf, There is, There is that Captain, who has obtained as manv Victories, as he has fought Battels! There is that Learned Man, who has found out the way to unite the Charms of Politeneſs, which are required in the Commerce of the World, with a deep and vaſt knowledge of the moſt ſublime Sciences, which he has acquired in his ſtudy! There is that Miniſter, who remains humble and modeſt notwithſtanding the Honour and Reſpect that is continually paid him upon the account of his Merit, as well as by reaſon of his Elevation! There is that unintereſted Man, who gets Riches without Injuſtice, who enjoys them without Pride, who loſes them without Grief, and who is as careful to relieve the needy, as to live an eaſy Life! There is that Man, who avoiding all manner of exceſs, is contented to reliſh pleaſures as much as neceſſity requires, and Regularity allows him! Can any one forbear to hear with pleaſure the Praiſes, which his good Conduct prompts others to beſtow upon Merit and Virtue? It is ſo great a pleaſure, that thoſe who are praiſed for ſome qualities they have, make it their cheif Study to be worthy of the praiſes, which they are deprived of, becauſe

they

they want ſome other good Qualities; being perſwaded that the want of thoſe praiſes wou'd at laſt make thoſe that are beſtowed upon them, very imperfect. It is therefore moſt certain, that Men are extremely greedy of praiſes: To which we may add, that they are no leſs unwilling † to hear the praiſes which a man beſtows upon himſelf. Men are commonly deſpiſed in proportion to the eſteem they ſeem to have for themſelves. They, who are never ſo much worthy of eſteem, ceaſe to be ſo, when they take care to eſteem, themſelves; and therefore when they have much praiſed themſelves, they muſt not expect that others ſhou'd praiſe 'em. The praiſes, which a Man beſtows upon himſelf, make others believe that he is extremely ſelf-conceited and vain, and conſequently raiſe their Contempt, Envy and Hatred.

MAXIM V.

Praiſes are often a meer intereſted Commerce.

REFLECTION.

There are many Men, who praiſe others not ſo much for their Glory, as for their own Intereſt. They are willing to commend them, in hopes of getting ſome-

† *Proprio laus ſemper ſordet in ore.*

thing

thing by it. Praiſes are dextrous, hidden and delicate flateries, which pleaſe differently thoſe who beſtow them, and thoſe who receive them : The firſt beſtow them, to ſhew their Wit and penetration; the latter receive them as a reward of their Merit. Amongſt thoſe who beſtow their praiſes, ſome will do it to be praiſed in their turn; others to open a way to their Fortune; ſome to avoid a loſs ; others to afford ſome pleaſure to themſelves; and moſt of thoſe who are praiſed, receive praiſes as heartily, as if their Glory was the ſole object of them. Whoever commends a Man, in hopes of a Liberality, looks upon him as a Mill, which affords no more Meal than it has Wind for. One muſt needs be an exceſſive Lover of Praiſes, to ſuffer one's ſelf to be inſnared by ſuch *Praiſers*, not conſidering that the ſame principle of Intereſt, which moveth them to ſpeak well of him, may move them to the contrary, if it be for their advantage : They will prefer the worſt of Men to him, if they are more favourable to them : When they are forced to give a good Character of him, and to do him Juſtice upon the account of his good qualities; they'll be ſure to Poyſon their praiſes with ſome malicious Remarks upon his Defects, to make 'em more odious, and expoſe him to the contempt of others. If I was deſirous of Praiſes, I ſhou'd not value thoſe that are beſtowed by ſuch Men: I had rather be unknown to them, than be commended

mended by them: If I was unknown to them, they wou'd do me no harm; whereas, after they have praiſed me, they will perhaps endeavour to prejudice me by a kind of Revenge, if I don't reward them as much as they think they deſerve, for having applauded me; or if they hope to be better rewarded by my Enemies.

MAXIM VII.

'Tis likely that a Man is ſincere in his Praiſes, if he dares blame you, when he thinks you are to blame.

REFLECTION.

THis is ſo true, that they who deſign to flatter a Man nicely with their praiſes, affect, in order to make 'em appear more ſincere, to find ſomething in him that may be criticized. But, abating of ſuch an Artifice, it is certain that when Men ſeem to be ſincerely inclined to blame any thing that deſerves to be blamed, we are very apt to believe, that what they praiſe, is truly praiſe-worthy. Indeed, it were to be wiſhed, that Men wou'd behave themſelves in ſuch a manner; they wou'd be then more eager to attain to perfection, becauſe it wou'd be more ſincerely cheriſhed; and Vices wou'd be more abhorred, becauſe they wou'd be more earneſtly aſſaulted.

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MAXIM VIII.

Seek not to be praiſed, but think only of deſerving it.

REFLECTION.

MEn are ſo Inconſtant and Capricious, that whoever depends upon their Praiſes and Applauſes, for his Glory and Repoſe, will miſs both of them: Let us be contented to do good and commendable Actions; we can never be deprived of the Merit of 'em. "Ambition is a perfect "Folly and Vanity; for an Ambitious "Man takes the Smoak for the Light, and "the Shadow for the Body; he makes the "tranquility of his Mind depend upon the "opinion of the Vulgar: he willingly de-"prives himſelf of his liberty, to be govern-"ed by the paſſions of other men; he "makes himſelf uneaſy, to pleaſe thoſe "that look upon him; he loves Virtue ac-"cording as *the People* love it; he does good "not for the ſake of Virtue, but for the ſake "of his Reputation; he is like a pierced "Cask, nothing will come out of it, unleſs "you give it Wind. † A merit, that is worthy of praiſes, may be ſpoiled by praiſes. An Ingenious Author ſays, and I repeat it

† *Charron* of Wiſdom *L.* 1. C. 22. n. 10.

after

after him: "Not but I love Praiſes, eſpe-
"cially, when they are beſtowed by Men
"who are good Judges of Virtue; but I
"am afraid of loving them too much.
"They corrupt Men; they make 'em ſelf-
"conceited, vain and preſumptuous; we
"ought to be worthy of 'em, and ſhun 'em;
"the beſt Praiſes are like the falſe ones; the
"worſt of Men have been moſt Praiſed by
"Flatterers; what Pleaſure is there in be-
"ing Praiſed as they have been? Good
"Praiſes are thoſe, which you'll beſtow
"upon me in my abſence, if I am ſo hap-
"py as to deſerve 'em: If you think that
"I am a truly good Man, you ought to be-
"lieve alſo, that I deſign to be Modeſt and
"to avoid Vanity. Spare me therefore, if
"you have any eſteem for me, and don't
"Praiſe me, as a Man that is greedy of
"Praiſes. (*Telemaque* 297.) If I content my ſelf with the Pleaſure of being Praiſed, the Praiſes beſtowed upon me, will be either falſe, but groſs; or true, but nice. If they are falſe, they'll make me ridiculous; if they are groſs, I ſhall be aſhamed of 'em; if they are nice and dexterous, they will, perhaps, flatter me, and ſwell me with Vanity: But if I have a true Merit, I ſhall not be vain, nor ridiculous, nor aſhamed of my ſelf.

MAXIM IX.

It is a kind of Injury done to a Man, not to Praiſe him dexterouſly.

REFLECTION.

THo' Men be never ſo vain, yet they will not own that they are ſo: But thoſe, who Praiſe a Man without any moderation, act as if they wou'd oblige him to acknowledge his Vanity, or at leaſt, as if they wou'd make others believe that he is a vain Man; and by ſuch a Conduct, they will rather excite his Indignation than his Gratitude. We need not drive Vanity out of its Retrenchments; for it has much ado to hide it ſelf. Praiſe a Man, without ſeeming to Praiſe him.

MAXIM X.

It requires a great skill to find out a juſt medium in our Praiſes.

REFLECTION.

WE muſt not pretend by our Praiſes to make a Dwarf of a Giant, or a Giant of a Dwarf. In the firſt caſe, we ſeem to doubt of the Merit of thoſe whom we Praiſe; becauſe we don't Praiſe 'em as much

much as we ſhou'd do. In the ſecond caſe, we banter our ſelves, or others; but let us rather ſay, that our exceſſive Praiſes excite Curioſity, and ſtir up Envy; ſo that if Merit does not anſwer the value that was ſet upon it, as it does commonly happen, the common Opinion revolts itſelf againſt the Cheat, and turns the *Praiſer* and the *Praiſed Man* into ridicule. Proportioned Praiſes are commonly very acceptable; they are like a Suit of Cloaths well made, which pleaſes thoſe that look upon it, and neither ſtraitens nor clogs the Man who wears it.

MAXIM XI.

We muſt have as much regard to thoſe who hear our Praiſes, as to thoſe upon whom we beſtow them.

REFLECTION.

N. is an Excellent Poet; but I take care not to ſay ſo to *M.* when he reads his Poems to me. Such Praiſes wou'd be very unſeaſonable; *M.* wou'd look upon them as an Inſult and a Reproach. It wou'd be likewiſe a very improper thing to Praiſe an Inferiour before his Superiour, about a Merit to which both of 'em do equally pretend, or to Applaud in the preſence of a Friend, a Man who abuſed him.

MAXIM XII.

A Man, who is extremely fond of Praiſes, wou'd have no Body but himſelf to be Praiſed.

REFLECTION.

THis is the Reaſon why *N.* will neither Praiſe others, nor hear 'em Praiſed. He fancies that the Praiſes beſtowed upon them, are as many things ſtoln from him: Yet he aſſures me that it is only out of love for Truth: I don't know whether I ought to believe him; for I have often obſerved, that he is not at all unwilling to be Praiſed for the good Qualities he has not. Tho' you ſpeak never ſo well of him, you tell him nothing that is new to him; he knows that he has it, before you tell him, or at leaſt he flatters himſelf with it, and if he ſeems to refuſe at any time the Praiſes which he juſtly deſerves, it is only in order to be more Praiſed than he deſerves, or to have a right to praiſe no Body.

VII. *The Flatterer.*

MAXIM I.

We are our first Flatterers.

REFLECTION.

WE do certainly flatter our ſelves, before any Body elſe thinks of flattering us. Don't we flatter our ſelves, when we preſume too much upon our Talents, when we are fond of our Opinions, when we perſwade our ſelves that we are more perfect than others? What cou'd Flatterers do more with reſpect to us? They Praiſe our Thoughts, they Applaude our Opinions, and Admire our Conduct. Well! Are we not willing to be accounted Wiſe in our Actions, Exact in our Opinions, and Penetrating in our Thoughts? Theſe are the Doors which we always keep open to Flattery; and there are but too many Men, whoſe Intereſt it is to go thro' them. Men never ſhut altogether the Door againſt Flatterers; at moſt, they puſh it gently upon them; but they always leave it a little open. Let us hear a Flatterer ſpeak: Here are his Words very agreeable to the intention and ſentiments of all thoſe of his Profeſſion. "I have won, ſays he, the "Heart of that Man, by a cunning Sub-

"miſſion, and a ſubtle Complaiſance; I "can now perſwade him to any thing in "the World. What wou'd it avail me to "have received that happy Talent from "Heaven, if I did not make an advantage "of the Weakneſs of Men? Their love of "Praiſes, and their fooliſh Pride, is the "greateſt of all; and I have made it my "Study to deceive 'em that way, ſince they "will be deceived. I know how to Praiſe "their Faults, to Comply with their Paſ-"ſions, and to Applaud their Folly: I ap-"ply my ſelf to know their weak ſide, and "I conform all my Actions to theirs: Are "they Merry? I am ſo too: Are they Me-"lancholy? I am more Melancholy than "they; and by that means they cannot be "without me; I make 'em Slaves to my "Applauſes, and I chain 'em to my Com-"plaiſance. Thus a dexterous Man knows "how to improve the Folly of Great Men "to his advantage: That's the Door thro' "which ſo many People enter into the Pa-"lace of Fortune. I have no Land, no "Houſes, no Income; but I know how to "Praiſe a Man who has 'em. That's my "Eſtate, the Income whereof is caſual, but "it is a ſolid Inheritance, and the fooliſh "Vanity of Men is a laſting Fund. † Such is the Condition which we are reduced to, by reaſon of Self-love, the greateſt of all

† *The Flatterer*, a Play.

Flat-

Flatterers. Let us not flatter our ſelves, and no Body will dare to flatter us. If Flatterers did not perceive that we are willing to be accounted conſiderable Men, they wou'd not give themſelves the trouble to prove it to us. The deſire of being flattered, is the reaſon why the Civil Society is, properly ſpeaking, a Commerce of officious Lies and falſe Praiſes. Men flatter one another, to be flattered in their turn; their mutual Praiſes make 'em conceited; the Vices of other Men go with them by the Name of Virtues, that they may conceal their own; and they think it a piece of Politeneſs to deceive others, and a pleaſure to be deceived. They don't love Truth, becauſe it makes 'em uneaſy, and therefore they muſt be told flattering Lies. Thoſe Reflections are as many Inſtructions, which teach us, that the more we love to flatter our ſelves, the farther we are from Perfection; becauſe, as long as we diſſemble our own Faults, and will not allow others to ſhew them to us on their worſe ſide, we ſhall take no care to mend 'em. I had rather no Body ſhou'd ſpeak of me, than if they ſhou'd Praiſe me too much: If they ſay nothing of me, I ſhall not ſuffer by it; but if they Praiſe me too much, they'll raiſe the Envy of other Men againſt me, and at the ſame time they'll excite their Curioſity; ſo that if it be found that I am unworthy of the Praiſes that are beſtowed upon me, (which may very well happen, becauſe it

is a difficult thing to come up to the great Opinion they have of me) inſtead of being eſteemed, I ſhall appear very contemptible; and ſo for a falſe Glory, wherewith a Flatterer feeds us, he expoſes us to a real Infamy. Flattery is ſo far from being advantageous to us, that it ſpoils the good Qualities we have. After all, if People are reſolved to flatter me, the Flatterers get leſs by me than I get by them: They get nothing by me, becauſe I have been ſo careful to know my ſelf, that I ſhall not be deceived by their Impoſtures: I get by them, becauſe their Flatteries are as many Inſtructions, which teach me what I ought to be.

MAXIM II.

Flatterers, who Praiſe Great Men for an imaginary Merit, lull them aſleep in real Miſeries.

REFLECTION.

GReat Men do extremely love to flatter themſelves, and conſequently deſire to be flattered; they will be applauded in proportion to their Grandeur and Elevation. Being little ſatisfied with the advantages which their Power affords 'em, they are alſo very fond of the eſteem of other Men, and grow formidable to thoſe, who don't

don't make 'em ſenſible that they believe they deſerve to be eſteemed. They have Rewards and Puniſhments in their Hands, which they may diſpoſe of at their Will; and therefore they never want Flatterers, who have no other motives for their flattering aſſiduity, but Fear and Intereſt. How many Flatterers, who make it their buſineſs to indulge Great Men in their Faults by an affected Complaiſance; to take ſome ingenious turns in order to ſet off an out-ſide of Virtue, which has nothing that is Great or Solid; to throw a Vail upon Truth, for fear they ſhou'd be offended at it; and to make 'em incorrigible, by perſwading them that they are excuſable! "Flatterers are worſe than thoſe "whom they flatter, and their Baſeneſs is "the cauſe of the Pride and Inſolence of "other Men: They corrupt their Mo- "deſty by admiring their Grandeur, and "crying up their Riches; whereas, if they "would renounce with an unanimous con- "ſent that voluntary Servitude, Great Men "wou'd be ready to court 'em, and deſire "'em to take a view of their Happineſs, "for fear it ſhou'd be of no uſe to them. "What wou'd it avail them to have ſo "many ſuperfluous Diſhes upon their Ta- "ble, if there was no Body to taſte of 'em; "for they themſelves do not very often "taſte of 'em, and Plenty begets Diſguſt? "Of what uſe wou'd their Rich Goods "and Magnificent Palaces be, if no Body

"came

"came to ſee them? For thoſe things are "not ſo conſiderable in themſelves, as be- "cauſe they are valued, and the poſſeſſion "thereof is thought to make a Man hap- "py. The Complaiſance of Flatterers is ſo extravagant, that it is even ridiculous. *Philip* of *Macedonia*, having been obliged to put on a Head-band, becauſe he had been wounded in the Head, moſt of his Courtiers appeared with the ſame Apparel, as if they had been wounded. The Young- er *Dionyſius* being very ſhort-ſighted, his Courtiers, to flatter him, made as if they had been half Blind, knocking one another, and ſtumbling at ever turn. *Combalus*, a Favourite of *Seleucus*, whom Queen *Strato- nice* was paſſionately in Love with, having made himſelf an Eunuch, to give no oc- caſion to Calumny all thoſe, who de- pended upon him for their Fortune, did the ſame. Becauſe *Mithridates* loved to practice Chirurgery, his Flatterers wou'd have him to cut and cauterize their Members, with- out any neceſſity for it. *Plato*'s Flatterers counterfeited his huge Shoulders; thoſe of *Ariſtotle* his liſping; and thoſe of *Alexander* the Great, his bending Head, and the ſharp- neſs of his Voice. Nothing can be more nauſeous than a profeſt Adulator, who out of a baſe complyance applauds every thing that he hears, without diſtinguiſhing what is true from what is falſe, and what is good from what is ill. "I beſeech you to ſay "once at leaſt *No*, that I may perceive "that

"that we are two, ſaid the Orator *Cælius* to a Flatterer.

But Flatterers make themſelves more odious ſtill, by applauding the faults of thoſe whom they flatter; by ſuggeſting ſome reaſons to them to juſtify their Injuſtices; by affording them ſome pretences to indulge themſelves in their ill practices; and by ſhewing them the way of ſatisfying their Paſſions. The chief Magiſtrates of *Perſia* told *Cambyſes*, who had a mind to marry his Siſter, that indeed they cou'd find no Law that allow'd of ſuch a Marriage; but that there was one, which permitted the King to do whatever he pleaſed. "Alas! "How unhappy is he who is above the reſt "of Men! He cannot very often ſee the "truth with his own Eyes; he is ſurround-"ed with People, who keep it from com-"ing to him; it is the Intereſt of every one "to deceive him; every Body covers his "Ambition with a pretence of Zeal; they "pretend to love the Prince, and they love "only the Riches he beſtows; they love "him ſo little that they flatter and betray "him to obtain his favours. We may there-fore believe that Great Men do not ſo much deſerve to be cenſured as their Flatterers: Let us pity the unhappineſs of the former, and deteſt the malice of the latter. "There "is none of us, ſays *Montagne*, (*L.* 3.) but "wou'd be worſe than Kings, if we was "continually corrupted by ſuch Raſcals, "as they are. The beſt Antidote we can have

have againſt that plague of Mankind is to repel, by an humble acknowledgment of our defects, the Pride wherewith Flatterers endeavour to inſpire us, and to give 'em no hopes of obtaining any favours from us. The moſt glorious praiſe that we can wiſh for, is to have ſome perfections, without deſiring that they ſhou'd be ſpoken of. Perfection is truly ſolid, when it is not kept up by empty Vanity.

MAXIM III.

Men will often cover and flatter the defects of others, to hide their own.

REFLECTION.

IT is true, that very often the Reaſon why Men flattter others, is becauſe they deſire to be flattered. By excuſing the faults of others, they hope that their own will be excuſed; but this is a pretended Commerce of gratitude, which ſeldom affords a real advantage. Men are never the better for all thoſe flatteries; and they who are proud of 'em, will be pitied by thoſe who hear 'em. Let us call to mind how much we deſpiſed thoſe, who reliſhed the Pleaſure of flattery, that we may be convinced of the contempt we ſhall lie under, if we ſuffer our ſelves to be deceived by the ſame charm.

MAX-

MAXIM IV.

No Man ought to avoid the Character of a Flatterer ſo, as to become a brutiſh Man.

REFLECTION.

I See but too many Men, who to avoid an exceſs, run into another: How difficult it is to keep a juſt *Medium!* It is a good thing not to flatter Vice; but it is an ill thing to be always unwilling to praiſe Virtue. Whoever refuſes to applaud Virtue, ſeems to diſapprove it, or at leaſt gives occaſion to think, that he is tormented with envy or jealouſy againſt thoſe, whoſe actions he will never approve, tho' they be never ſo worthy of approbation. Men are commonly willing to cenſure thoſe whom they have much ado to praiſe; and therefore, all thoſe, who out of an affected niceneſs of Conſcience, will never praiſe any Body, are commonly inſupportable in the commerce of the World; becauſe inſtead of a ſweet Complaiſance, they ſhew nothing but bitterneſs and ſeverity.

XIII. *The Lyar.*

MAXIM. I.

A Lyar is hated by God and deſpiſed by Men.

REFLECTION.

IT is a baſe weakneſs, which making us afraid of Men, moves us to betray Truth by a Lye: And becauſe baſeneſs and weakneſs are contemptible, it does naturally follow that Lyars muſt be deſpiſed. But whilſt a Liar ſtands in fear of Men, he ſhews that he does not fear God; ſeeing notwithſtanding the perfect knowledge which God has of our moſt ſecret Thoughts, and moſt artificial Treaſons, he dares to inſult Truth, that is, God himſelf: Wherefore he becomes the object of his hatred; for a falſe Man can never be the object of his Love. Lying is ſo baſe a thing that the greateſt Lyars cannot bear it in other Men. Truth is ſo worthy of God and Men, that we do acknowledge we ought to pay our homage to it, tho' we don't do it. When we depart from Truth, an inward Reaſon, which we can never ſtifle, gives us a ſecret check, which wou'd bring us back to our duty, were it not for the depravation of our Minds. We lye to ſatisfy our Paſſions, and the habit of Lying grows ſo ſtrong upon us, that after

after we have deceived others, we deceive our ſelves: which is the cauſe of our wrong Reaſonings, of our falſe ſteps, of our odd undertakings, of our Projects without execution, and of our diſorderly Conduct; becauſe we are not directed by Truth, and yet it is the only good Guide we can have. "The baniſhment of Truth is the firſt "ſtroke of the corruption of Manners. There is nothing I fear ſo much as to be falſe; for if I am a falſe Man, I ſhall neither agree with God, nor with Men, nor with my ſelf.

MAXIM II.

A Lyar is not to be truſted.

REFLECTION.

EVery deceit is odious to Men; every Lyar is ſubject to deceive others; therefore every Lyar is odious to thoſe with whom he converſes. No Body can rely upon him, becauſe there is no relying upon his words, which ſeldom agree with his thoughts. *Montagne* (l. 1. c. 9.) "Certain-"ly Lying is a great Vice. We are tied to "one another only by Speech: Our under-"ſtandings being directed by no other way "than that of words, he who ſpeaks falſely, "betrays the publick Society. It is the on-"ly Inſtrument, whereby we impart our "thoughts;

"thoughts; it is the Interpreter of our "Souls: If we are deprived of it, we are "no longer tied to, nor know one another: "If it deceives us, it breaks all our cor- "reſpondence, and diſolves the bond of our "Policy. Truth it ſelf is not credited in the Mouth of a Lyar; becauſe his want of ſincerity makes us look upon it as a Lye, when he ſpeaks it. As for me, when I am ſure that a Man is a Lyar, I hear him as a teller of Idle ſtories: And thoſe ſtories afford me a Morality, as *Æſop*'s Fables; for my averſion for Lying increaſes by conſidering how much Lyars are hated by every Body.

XIV. *The Boaſting Man.*

MAXIM I.

They, who have the leaſt Courage, are often the boldeſt in their Words.

REFLECTION.

WHy does a Man boaſt himſelf, unleſs it be to extort, if I may ſay ſo, from thoſe who hear him a Belief, which he knows he does not deſerve? His doubting to obtain eaſily what he deſires, makes me diſtruſt what he ſays; and experience teaches

teaches me that we are both in the right; for I have always obſerved that the Actions of great Boaſters are very much inferiour to their words. The words of a Boaſter ſay only that he is a brave Man; but his actions only prove that he is really ſo; and if he was more active than he is, he wou'd certainly ſpeak leſs; they who are only for ſpeaking, do very much neglect the performance of any thing. A Man who hopes to impoſe upon others by his Boaſting, (which is no difficult thing) does not much care to do great Actions, which it wou'd be a difficult thing to perform. Indeed, why ſhou'd he give himſelf ſo much trouble to acquire Glory, if meer ſpeaking wou'd do it? It is very natural for a Man, who flatters himſelf, to take the ſhorteſt way to accompliſh his deſires. I ſay, when a Man flatters himſelf that it is a ſure way; for one may be eaſily deceived in ſuch hopes. Swaggerers make no great Fortune in the Kingdom of Reputation; they make ſome noiſe in it by their Diſcourſes, but it is a noiſe which renders 'em troubleſome, becauſe it does but ſtun the Ears of thoſe who hear 'em. They are as importunate as they pretend to great matters; they wou'd be ſpoken of, and in Truth they are ſo; but then they are as much depreſt by Contempt, as they raiſe themſelves by their *Rodomontado's*. The more they Boaſt, the more every Body is curious to obſerve all their Steps; and it

happens moſt times, that they fall very ſhort of their bragging Words. *(Gracian)* "A great Merit is required to anſwer a "great Expectation: He that looks, frames "a great Idea; becauſe it is eaſier for him "to imagine great things, than for him "that is look'd upon, to do them. It is "the common fate of all things that are "much cried up, never to attain to the "degree of Perfection, that was expected: "Reality cou'd never equal Imagination; "becauſe it is as difficult to have all Per-"fections, as it is eaſy to have an Idea of "'em. I will never boaſt my ſelf; for I had rather others ſhou'd add ſomething to my Reputation, than if I ſhou'd give 'em occaſion by my Boaſting to leſſen it. It is my Duty to do that which deſerves to be eſteemed: It is the Duty of others to eſteem what I do that deſerves it: They'll do it, if they pleaſe, 'tis their buſineſs.

MAXIM II.

He that Boaſts of a good thing he has done, gives occaſion to believe that he did it only to Boaſt of it.

REFLECTION.

A Judicious Silence about a good Action, is like a Shadow in Painting, which ſets off the Luſtre of it. Men love

to

to make publick the Merit of those who love to conceal it: Their Modesty which moves 'em to hide it, is a motive which prompts others to discover it: They think themselves obliged to do him that Justice which he refuses to himself; so that, Reputation fetches him out of the deepest part of his voluntary Obscurity, to place him in the Light, that Men may pay him the Honour which Virtue has always a right to pretend to. The contrary happens to him who Boasts himself: Men being perswaded that he has done a good thing only to speak of it, will no more talk of it, than if he had not done it; or if they mention it, 'tis in order to approve that good thing, and to censure at the same time the Author of it. Every Body admired the Brave Action of *N.* when others spoke of it; every Body despises it ever since he speaks too much of it: They don't call it an ill Action, for they dare not; but he has given occasion to call it a vain Action, and therefore they dare call it so. He spoke to get some Glory by it, but he loses by speaking the Glory which he wou'd have preserved by his Silence. Boasting Men are as unacceptable, as those who have an ill Smell.

MAXIM III.

The Words of thoſe who boaſt themſelves, to appear conſiderable Men, are ſeldom attended with any Action.

REFLECTION.

SOme, who pretend to be conſiderable Men, have no other Credit than to make People believe by their Artifices, that they can do a great deal for them; tho' they have ſo little power that they can do nothing for themſelves. I look upon thoſe Men, as I do upon thoſe who boaſt of having ſome admirable Secrets, and yet are always poor and miſerable; that is, I don't mind them more than I do Mountebanks, who amuſe the People with their bold prattling, to get a great deal more from them than they can give 'em: They are like thoſe who ſeek the Philoſophers Stone, and who promiſe a Million of Piſtoles to get it. Nevertheleſs, they who pretend to be conſiderable Men, are not always moved to it by a principle of Intereſt; Vanity is often the cauſe of it: It is a very tickling pleaſure for a Man of that Character, when at his coming out of his Cloſet, he finds a great many Courtiers in his Anti-Chamber, who, gaping after the Favours of Fortune, hope to obtain them by his Credit. Tho' he can no more diſpoſe

poſe of 'em for them than for himſelf, yet he entertains them in their hopes with the ſame aſſurance, as if he was Maſter of 'em. The hopes he gives 'em, make him to be reſpected, which is the thing he aims at: When thoſe Men come to be undeceived, he'll deceive others in their turn. Tho' he knows that he does not deſerve the honour that is done him, becauſe he is not ſo eminent a Man as People take him to be, yet he is not troubled for it; for he conſiders that thoſe, to whom he makes his Court, are not more worthy of Honour than himſelf. One wou'd think, that he is perſwaded, that the Honours of this World are not ſolid and valuable enough, to uſe any ſolid means in order to acquire 'em. A Man, who pretends to have a conſiderable power, wou'd not find ſo many Cullies, if they were not too greedy of the Favours which they expect from him, or if they were not too much affected with meer appearances. He Plays a Game, which deceives no Body but the moſt ſuperficial Men, who, for want of penetration, know not things as they are in themſelves. Every thing that ſhines, dazles 'em; every thing that affects 'em, hurries them away; and being thus dazled and hurried, they ſuffer themſelves to be led at a Man's pleaſure. This is ſo true, that there are ſome Men, who, by much praiſing themſelves, have at laſt obliged ſome other Men to Praiſe 'em likewiſe. As for me,

I am ſo far from boaſting of a power which I have not, that I find my ſelf very much inclined not to ſpeak of that which I have, that I may not be troubled with importunate Men.

MAXIM IV.

The Boaſting Man is commonly a Deciding Man.

REFLECTION.

THE ſame Vanity, which moves Men to boaſt themſelves, moves 'em likewiſe to be peremptory. They boaſt themſelves, becauſe they are willing to appear worthy of Praiſe; and they fancy they ſhou'd derogate from their pretenſions, if they did not decide, without expecting any reply: But it does frequently happen, that they are depreſt by others, becauſe they affect to raiſe themſelves above them. A peremptory way ſhews too much Authority and Preſumption, to pleaſe others. It is the part of an ignorant, or a young Man, to decide magiſterially, and with precipitation. I am no very deciding Man, becauſe I don't flatter my ſelf to have Penetration and Wit enough, to diſtinguiſh readily what is true from what is falſe, and what is good from what is ill: I never repented yet of my want of forwardneſs in deciding.

XV. *The*

XV. *The Ill Tongue.*

MAXIM I.

Ill Tongues are ſo common, that no Man can flatter himſelf to be ſecure from their Inſults.

REFLECTION.

THere is nothing dearer to Men than a good Reputation, ſeeing they often buy it at the expence of their Lives and Fortunes; nevertheleſs, there is nothing that is ſo often aſſaulted: The Great and Little Ones, the Rich and Poor, Young and Old, Good and Wicked Men, are all generally expoſed to the piercing Darts of Detraction. (*M. Flechier.*) "It deforms "every thing, it ſpares neither Juſt Men "nor Sinners; it keeps a dreadful Tribu- "nal always ſet up to Judge the Actions, "and even the Intentions of Men, ſearch- "ing their very Hearts with great pre- "ſumption; it delights above all things, in "defaming the beſt Men, and by its inve- "nom'd Darts, it brings Innocence it ſelf "into ſuſpicion, and makes Truth difficult "to be known by thoſe, who have been "ſeduced or prepoſſed by it. The malig- nity of detracting Men is grown to ſuch a heighth, that it poyſons every thing: They

pretend to ſhew an ill thing where there is none; and they will not acknowledge a good thing where it is to be found. For example, becauſe there is generally a falſe Devotion in the World, they can hardly believe that there are any true Devout Men: If a Man, after many reflections upon his paſt Life, leaves off Gaming, and gives over the Pleaſures of the World, to live a more regular Life; if a young Lady renounces Luxury and Vanity, to live according to the Rules of Piety and Chriſtian Modeſty, they enquire into the Reaſons of that Change, but they always pitch upon the leſs Charitable, to aſcribe ſuch a Reformation to Humour, Caprice, Levity, Vanity, or to their ill Circumſtances. Men are as willing to detract their Neighbours, as they are willing to ſpeak, and when they ſpeak, they are never better pleaſed, than when they begin to ſpeak ill of 'em. If a Converſation falls, detraction will keep it up; every Body concurs in it; nay, they who profeſs a great regularity, will ſometimes piouſly favour it, and make it ſo much the more cruel and dangerous, becauſe it is ſtrengthened with their ſuffrage and approbation. Such a Conduct is as deteſtable, as it is contrary to Humanity. Alas! Are we made to deſtroy one another in ſuch a manner? We ſhall find, if we mind it, that a detracting Man is guilty of Envy, Hatred, Injuſtice, Malice, Treaſon and Cruelty; but it ſeems, that

all

all Men make a publick Profeſſion of thoſe things. If I was to wiſh for Authority, it wou'd be only to ſilence detracting Men; it would be only to make ſome Laws againſt evil ſpeaking, as ſevere as thoſe which are enacted againſt Murder and Robberies. All that I can do now, when I happen to be with detracting Men, is to ſupply my want of Power, by expreſſing outwardly my averſion for ſuch a thing: I ſhew a diſcontented Face; I am ſilent; or if I ſpeak, I do it only to juſtify, as far as Charity requires it, thoſe who are ill ſpoken of. Laſtly, I uſe all the skill I am capable of, to make the Converſation fall upon another Subject: I wou'd do more, if I had a greater Power.

MAXIM II.

If a detracting Man does no harm to thoſe whom he ſpeaks ill of, 'tis only for want of an occaſion.

REFLECTION.

BUt don't we prejudice a Man, when we ſpeak ill of him? A detracting Man wants no occaſion to do a great deal of miſchief; for detraction is always attended with great miſchief, which is moſt times irreparable, becauſe it is almoſt impoſſible, that he who did it, ſhou'd be able to

to deſtroy it, whatever Retraction he may make of it. How can he recall and annihilate a Word, which has been ſpoken by ſo many Men, and which has as much increaſed in malignity, as it has been multiplied by an infinite number of Repetitions? How can he take off the Impreſſion which ſuch a repetition and malignity have made in an infinite number of Men? How can he be heard by them all, that they may know that he has retracted what he had ſaid? The more we reflect upon thoſe difficulties, the more it will appear that evil-ſpeaking is a miſchievous thing, becauſe it will be found that it is impoſſible to make reparation for it.

MAXIM III.

A detracting Man, who knows that he gives occaſion to ſpeak ill of him, thinks to juſtify himſelf by ſpeaking ill of others.

REFLECTION.

'Tis in vain for a detracting Man to flatter himſelf with the hopes of ſuch a Juſtification; he muſt not expect to be juſtified by any one of thoſe who hear him: They'll think that the Man ill ſpoken of is guilty; but they'll never believe that he, who ſpeaks ill of him, is Innocent. Let the detracting Man ſincerely judge of it

it by himſelf, when he hears ſome Body ſpeak ill of others: Will he excuſe the Faults he obſerves in him, in favour of his evil-ſpeaking? We might certainly be more reaſonable in our Actions, if we did penetrate into the inſide of thoſe, who are Witneſſes of them. Such a penetration is not ſo difficult as it is thought to be: We need only ſuppoſe that we are in their caſe, and judge of their ſentiments by ours. And then, when we come to ſpeak ill of a Man, we ſhall not think of hiding our Faults by diſcovering his; ſeeing we know that we are ſo far from excuſing the Faults of thoſe, who ſpeak ill of others in our preſence, that we will not ſo much as excuſe their evil-ſpeaking, tho' we be never ſo well pleaſed to hear 'em. This Precept, which is ſo natural, To do by others as we wou'd be done by, forces us, as it were, to do that Juſtice, to others and forces others to do the like to us. If Humanity is not powerful enough to make us hate evil-ſpeaking; let ſelf-love at leaſt do it; let us Judge of the ſenſibility of thoſe, whom we wound in the moſt ſenſible part, by our own; and knowing how grievous it is to hear evil-ſpeaking, let us learn to forbear ſpeaking ill of others.

XVI. *The*

XVI. *The Swearer.*

MAXIM I.

You ought to rely more upon Virtue and Probity, than upon Oaths.

REFLECTION.

HE, who for want of equity and uprightneſs, does not ſcruple to betray Truth, will no leſs betray it after an Oath, than if he had not ſworn at all. A wicked Man having given up his Soul to injuſtice, will eaſily make an outward ſhew of Probity; he is very willing to ſwear at any time, becauſe his Oaths are ſo many ſnares which he lays to honeſt Men, that he may the better deceive 'em. Why ſhou'd I require an Oath of a Man of Honour? Can I have a better ſurety for the truth of what he ſays, than his Probity? Being ſo true to his duty, wou'd he be wanting to do it without an Oath? Why ſhou'd I require an Oath from an ill Man? Have I any reaſon to believe that he will be truer to his word, than to his duty?

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MAXIM II.

Uſe no Oaths; but keep your Word without Swearing.

REFLECTION.

THis is what the *Scythians* ſaid to *Alexander* the Great. We learn from that Maxim, that we ſhou'd never Swear, but when we are neceſſarily obliged to it. When I hear any Body Swear, without any neceſſity, I am apt to believe that he does it, becauſe his Conſcience tells him, that he does not deſerve to be believed upon his meer word. I am never impoſed upon by Swearing Men; I look upon them as Men, who having got the habit of Swearing, do not conſider the ill conſequences of it, or care ſo little for it, that it is indifferent to them whether they be ſincere in their Oaths, or not; for Habits are commonly attended with indifferency and want of attention. Don't we ſee ſome Men, who having got ſuch a habit, never ſpeak without Swearing, and without mixing the moſt Sacred things with their Oaths; who Swear out of Anger and Debauchery, to paſs away the time, without any reaſon, without any attention, aim, or deſign in it, and without being able to ſhew what advantage they get by it? Their Oaths ſerve them inſtead of Tranſitions, in their diſcourſes:

courſes: To Swear and Speak, is the ſame thing to them; but it is not ſo with thoſe that hear 'em; for if they were contented to Speak without Swearing, they wou'd not be ſo much abhorred by Wiſe Men. Their Oaths ſtain the good things they ſay, and raiſe the indignation of honeſt Men, againſt 'em. I take every Swearer to be a paſſionate, or an inconſiderate, or a looſe Man, or one, whoſe Education has been very much neglected: Every one of thoſe things is odious to an honeſt Man.

XVII. *The Promiſer.*

MAXIM I.

Never promiſe any thing without theſe two Proviſo's, If I can, If it be not againſt my Duty.

REFLECTION.

THere is nothing more lovely, than to love to oblige others: Nevertheleſs it is the duty of a prudent and diſcreet Man not to be ſo far overcome by his obliging humour, as to promiſe any thing that is deſired of him, without conſidering, whether he can, or ought to grant it. Too great a deſire of being kind to others, or too great

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a timidity, which does not permit to refuſe any thing, may make a Man exceſſive in his promiſes, which will render his Zeal indiſcreet, and his Timidity ſhameful. If my promiſes are not ſuited to my power, I ſhall expoſe my ſelf to the contempt of Men; becauſe my weakneſs will be better known to them. If I Promiſe out of baſhfulneſs what I cannot perform; I ſhall bluſh much more, when it will appear that I am not in a capacity of performing what I have promiſed. If my duty be not the Rule of my Promiſes, I ſhall do my ſelf as much prejudice, by reaſon of the ill opinion which others will entertain of me, as I have been willing to oblige 'em, by my Promiſes to them. I ought not to be aſhamed to refuſe to do an unjuſt thing; he, who requires it from me, ſhou'd rather be aſhamed; the only thing that ſhou'd make me aſhamed, is that perhaps I have given occaſion to think that I was unreaſonable enough to to make ſuch a Promiſe, and to perform it, I do inviolably keep my word, when I can, when I think I have not given it without a cauſe, when I have reaſon to believe, that if I keep it, I ſhall not wrong the Perſon to whom I gave it, and that it will not be more prejudicial to me than beneficial to him. The performance of one's Promiſe may be attended with an inconveniency, which cou'd not be foreſeen; and 'tis not likely that he, who made ſuch a Promiſe, was willing to ſuffer by it. If I don't Promiſe

miſe ſo much as I am deſired, I am willing to do more than is expected from me. For I think our Deeds ſhou'd always exceed our Promiſes.

MAXIM II.

He, who is always ready to Promiſe, will not be ſo ready to perform what he has promiſed.

REFLECTION.

BEcauſe ſuch Promiſes are made by Men, who don't conſider whether they can or ought to perform them; or they are made ſo raſhly, that they ſoon ſlip out of their memory. A Man, who does not give his word too haſtily, will not break it raſhly. I had rather Promiſe leſs than I am requir'd, than do leſs than I have promiſed. I cou'd willingly uſe the words of *Montagne*: (L. 3.) "I am very nice in the performance of my "Promiſes, even to a ſcruple; and I am "willing to make 'em at all times uncertain "and conditional: The Rule I have pre-"ſcribed to my ſelf makes me uneaſy: I "had rather be bound bv a Notary, and "all other ſuch Formalities, than by "my Word: ſo ſcrupulous and exact I am "in the performance of it. They, who think it their duty to perform exactly, what they have promiſed, will not be raſh and forward in their Promiſes.

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MAXIM III.

Men do often Promiſe according to their hopes, and keep their Promiſes according to their fear.

REFLECTION.

I Don't at all rely upon the Promiſe of a Man, who is moved to make it meerly by his hopes; not doubting, that if he does not obtain what he hopes for, he will not grant me what he has promiſed. The ſame hopes, which may deceive the Promiſer, will not fail to deceive the Perſon to whom he made a Promiſe. I make the ſame judgment of a Man, who keeps his word according to his fear; for his fear being over, his Promiſe ſubſiſts no longer. I take therefore all thoſe Promiſes to be very conditional; and conſequently I rely upon them no farther than I think the conditions will be effected: I ground my confidence upon the motive of the Promiſe.

MAXIM IV.

A Man gets more by promiſing, than by performing what he has promiſed.

REFLECTION.

AND therefore they, who never do a good Office, but for their own Intereſt, will make a Man ſtay a long time for it, before they grant it: They know that Men have as great an indifferency for what they have got, as they ſhewed themſelves eager to get it; and conſequently that their conſtant Services to thoſe, of whom they hope to receive a favour, will ceaſe as ſoon as that favour is no longer hoped for. Wherefore a judicious and penetrating Man, who knows how to value things according to their worth, does not much rely upon ſuch ſervices: 'Tis in vain to propoſe 'em to him as a thing on which he may build ſome Projects, he does not think it to be ſolid enough, to lay any laſting foundations upon it. I am not ſurprized that thoſe Promiſes ſhou'd have an effect contrary to that, which it ſeems the performance of 'em ſhou'd have produced: It is a mutual intereſted Commerce, to which a Man, to whom a Promiſe is made, fancies to have as much right, as the Promiſer. That Intereſt ſpoils the nobleſt Virtues, and makes us neglect the practice of 'em. Were it not

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for it, Men wou'd be generous in their Promiſes, and wou'd feel the effects of 'em, and expreſs their gratitude for them.

XVIII. *The Novileſt.*

MAXIM I.

When a prepoſſeſt Noveliſt ſpeaks the Truth, 'tis a meer chance.

REFLECTION.

A Prepoſſeſt Noveliſt ſays nothing but what agrees with his prejudices: 'Tis only by chance that he believes or ſpeaks the truth: For what he believes and ſays, is not always falſe; ſeeing the party he favours may be alſo favoured by Fortune, and ſo afford him a happy ſucceſs, which ſhall be the matter of his belief and diſcourſes. But a Noveliſt is not always prejudiced in favour of ſuch and ſuch a Party, but only in favour of that which furniſhes him with all his News: Thoſe News are always infallible, if we may believe him, and he maintains them with the ſame aſſurance, as if he had been the chief Actor of the Events which have been told him. The reaſon of his infatuation is, that he is unwilling to be thought ſo credulous, as to

ſuffer himſelf to be deceived, In the mean time the prepoſſeſt Noveliſt prepoſſeſſes many others; which occaſions abundance of News, that are told for certain; tho' the only Proof they have of their certainty is, that they have read or heard them.

MAXIM II.

Tho' a Noveliſt is no farther concern'd in great Events than to relate them, yet he thinks himſelf concern'd in the execution of 'em.

REFLECTION.

WHich is the reaſon why he takes ſo great a delight in telling News, and maintains them with obſtinacy. † "That "Man who wou'd be afraid of the leaſt dan-"ger, longs to know the end of that War, "and is more concern'd for it, than the Sol-"diers who expoſe themſelves in it. One wou'd think, by his way of ſpeaking, that he gives a faithful account of his deſigns, to make us approve the Juſtice thereof; of his Steps, to make us eſteem his Prudence; and of his Actions, to make us admire his Courage. But if, notwithſtanding his great Zeal, he finds himſelf reduced to ſuch an extremity, as not to be able to ſay any

† *Charron* of Wiſdom.

thing

thing, that deſerves to be admired, eſteemed, or applauded, he places himſelf, by an effect of his Imagination, in the room of the Generals, and Miniſters, and even of the Prince himſelf, to juſtify by his Reaſonings, baſe Actions, imprudent Steps, and unjuſt Deſigns; and at laſt, if he approves of 'em, he concludes that it was impoſſible to do better, becauſe he thinks every thing is right. If he does not approve of em, he flatters himſelf, that if he had been one of the Council, things might have had a better ſucceſs, becauſe he wou'd have given a different advice. All thoſe things are the common effect of prejudices, or of a ſpeculation that is attended with no practice.

MAXIM III.

The profeſt Noveliſt is equally pleaſed with good and ill News.

REFLECTION.

A Profeſt Noveliſt is like a Merchant, who, for fear of loſing his Trade and Credit, had rather ſell bad Commodities than none at all: A Noveliſt, without News, wou'd be reduced to a very Melancholy and Languiſhing Life; for he has no other employment. To hear and tell News is his Trade, his Profeſſion, his Office,

his Dignity: And as we ſee every Day, that every Body diſcharges the duties of his place, tho' they make ſome People uneaſy; ſo the Noveliſt tells his News, without much caring for the trouble they may give others. The grief which commonly attends ill News, makes me unwilling to hear, or publiſh 'em: They are but too ſoon known; we need not be impatient to hear 'em: Every Day we are ignorant of 'em, is a happy Day for us.

MAXIM IV.

Whilſt a Noveliſt regulates in his fancy the affairs of the State, he commonly orders his own very ill.

REFLECTION:

HE is like a Woman, who makes it her buſineſs to read Romances: Her Mind being taken up with Stately and Magnificent Palaces, with wonderful Intrigues and Adventures, with amorous Princes, who amuſe her very agreeably with their faithfulneſs, complaiſance and ſubmiſſion to thoſe whom they love; ſhe cannot endure the plainneſs of her Houſe, take a particular view of the affairs of her Family, and ſee with any Pleaſure a Husband, who, far from ſpeaking like a Prince paſſionately in love with her, does often expreſs

expreſs ſome contempt for her, at leaſt a great deal of indifferency, or at moſt a friendſhip regulated by Reaſon, and kept up by uſe: In ſhort, Love is the only thing tha runs in her Head. Such is the Character of our Noveliſt; whilſt his Mind runs over States, Kingdoms, and Empires; whilſt he reaſons about Embaſſies, Negotiations, Treaties, and other ſuch Political matters; whilſt he fancies that he is converſing with Generals, Miniſters, and Princes; how can he take any delight in confining himſelf to his Houſe, in ſtooping to the little concerns of his Family, in converſing with his Wife and Children, and in thinking of a better ſettlement? He makes the Fortune of the greateſt States his own; he equally ſhares with Princes and Emperors in their Calamities and Happineſs, he ſpends what he has, for ſuch an Imaginary Sharing, and lives a moſt miſerable Life in his own Country, to keep correſpondence in other Countries, that he may be informed of what paſſes there.

XIX. *The Tale-bearer.*

MAXIM. I.

A Tale-bearer is often a Babbler or a Malicious Man.

REFLECTION.

IF we conſider the hatred which is occaſioned by Reports, the quarrels which they create, and the diviſions which they foment; we ſhall find that they who make 'em, are moved to it by a great itching of ſpeaking, or by an extreme deſire of prejudicing others. Indeed one muſt needs be very fond of ſpeaking, to meddle with the affairs of other Men in ſuch a manner, without any neceſſity, authority, and order for it; or delight very much in diſorder, to be ſo willingly the occaſion of it. Such a thing ſeems to me to be ſo unworthy of an honeſt Man, that I have much ado to report ſome obliging things, leſt ſome People ſhou'd ſuſpect that I may as well report ſome that are diſadvantageous. A Man may prejudice his own affairs by being too Zealous for thoſe of other Men: tho' he be a diſcreet Perſon, yet he may be accounted a great talker by thoſe whom it concerns not to hear him; and he may ſay ſeveral things which, tho'

true,

true, will be more unacceptable than Lies. However, a Man muſt not refuſe to ſpeak, when he thinks that Juſtice requires it: But let him do it in ſuch a manner, that if there is any ill thing in it, it may be aſcribed only to the ill diſpoſition of the Hearer, and not to the Ingenuity of the Speaker.

MAXIM II.

Don't give free acceſs to a Tale-bearer.

REFLECTION.

IF you are apt to hearken to Reports, you will be at the diſcretion of the moſt wicked Men, who will be glad to diſquiet your Mind: You'll hinder your reconciliation with your Enemies; (for they who hearken to reports, ſwell them, if they be never ſo little prejudic'd againſt thoſe that are ſpoken of.) Nay, you'll run the danger of falling out with your Friends, tho' you know by a long experience that their Fidelity has always been ſincere and inviolable. Laſtly, by much hearkning to reports, you may contract the ſame ill habit. I have found out a way to get rid of Delators, which has proved very ſucceſsful to me: When I am oblig'd to hear 'em, I intimate to them, that I will not believe what they ſay, unleſs they get it confirmed to me by thoſe who are concern'd in it.

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It is a thing they'll never ſubmit to; and therefore I will not believe 'em.

MAXIM III.

You ought to be leſs inclined to believe a Report, than to hear it.

REFLECTION.

THE Conſequences of a Report are only dangerous, becauſe it is credited: If a Man cou'd hear a Report, without believing it, it wou'd be only an Amuſement, which wou'd not diſquiet him in the leaſt. In order to hear Reports with indifferency, and to avoid being ſurpriſed by the Artifices, or Simplicity of thoſe who make 'em, I take care to examine their Manners, their Inclinations, and their Genius, to know whether they deſign to prejudice me out of Malice; whether it be their intereſt to make me believe ſuch a thing; whether they be acted by Revenge; whether they magnifie what they ſay, to make it more conſiderable, leſt they ſhould be thought to amuſe themſelves about little and trifling Things; whether Jealouſie, Envy, or ſome other ill Principle makes 'em put an ill Conſtruction upon Things. Laſtly, whether for want of Knowledge and Penetration, they take up indifferently every thing they hear, and confound it without

out any ill deſign. But becauſe it is a very difficult thing to make ſuch an Examination, I never make an abſolute Judgment about reports. I take all thoſe meaſures and precautions, eſpecially with reſpect to my Friends. Certainly it would be a very unreaſonable thing for me to condemn ſo raſhly a Friend who never gave me occaſion to complain of him. I am told a Tale which might induce me to hate my Friend, if I did not uſe ſuch precautions as Friendſhip and even Humanity requires of me: I ought therefore to uſe ſuch precautions. I wou'd not judge a Cauſe about a ſmall ſum of Money without having unexceptionable Witneſſes; nay, I wou'd not believe thoſe Witneſſes unleſs they had been ſworn according to the forms of Law; I wou'd give a ſufficient time to the Parties concern'd to prepare things for a Hearing, leſt I ſhou'd give a wrong Judgment: But ſhou'd I be ſo hard, ſo unjuſt and ſo unreaſonable as to condemn my Friend upon the firſt Report, without ſuſpending my Judgment for ſome time, till I have heard him? Certainly I ſhou'd be more furious and paſſionate than equitable and judicious. How many Men might we acquit, if we were more reaſonable than paſſionate?

XX. *The*

XX. *The Adviſing Man.*

MAXIM I.

The beſt Advice is that which is given ſeaſonably.

REFLECTION.

TO adviſe a Man whilſt he is tranſported by the violence and impetuoſity of his Paſſion; to adviſe a Man, who being full of buſineſs, cannot take time enough to hear you with as ſerious an attention as the ſubject requires; to adviſe a Man about a project, which he cannot break without doing himſelf more prejudice than the advice will do him good; to adviſe a Man in the preſence of thoſe who love to find fault with his Conduct, whom he hates, or who have already given him the ſame advice, which he would not follow; to adviſe a Man who is jealous of you, and hates you, when you know by experience that he has an ill opinion of you and deſpiſes you; to adviſe a Man in all ſuch and the like caſes is a raſh and imprudent thing, becauſe 'tis done very unſeaſonably. Never give any advice but when you hope that it will be followed; and therefore never give it but in ſuch Circumſtances

cumſtances as will not hinder the execution of it. Every thing that is unſeaſonable cannot pleaſe, and conſequently is always very unacceptable, and will be altogether rejected.

MAXIM II.

The advice which ſeems to be given with the greateſt ſincerity, and is conſequently the moſt acceptable, is that which a Man ſeems to give without any ſelf-intereſt.

REFLECTION.

WHEN a Man adviſes another without any ſelf-intereſt, he does it without deſigning to flatter his Vanity, to ſatisfy ſelf-love, and to get ſomething by it: He does it when he is requir'd to do it, when he thinks a Man deſires it, and that it will be acceptable to him: He does it without pretending to force his Liberty, and to impoſe upon him the neceſſity of following his advice, without pretending to make a Law which ought not to be violated. Laſtly, to adviſe a Man is to give him ſome Inſtructions which he may make uſe of for his Good. This is what they who deſire to be adviſed require of thoſe who adviſe 'em. If any Body asks my advice, or, if I think my ſelf indiſpenſably obliged to adviſe him, without being requir'd to do it, I do it at laſt, but I don't pretend

pretend to make a Law of it; I willingly permit every Body to examine, reject, or follow my advice: I don't aſcribe to my ſelf an infallible Light, nor an abſolute Authority, I adviſe, I don't command: I adviſe others with great ſincerity, and, as I think, without pretending that no Body can think better than my ſelf. It is the duty of a wiſe Man to hear all the advices that are given him; but a wiſe Man ought not always to follow them; and therefore I do not take it ill, if any Body refuſes to follow mine. I am not fond of adviſing others, becauſe I know that they are ſo far from making uſe of the advices which they don't deſire, that they ſeldom follow thoſe which they deſire. The only thing that I aim at is to make thoſe whom I adviſe better Men, and more content, and not to prove to them that I am a better Man, and more content than they. When I give ſome Inſtructions to others, I endeavour to ſtrengthen my ſelf in the practice of thoſe which I give to my ſelf, remembring this Maxim, that when a Man adviſes others to practice Virtue, it is a new reaſon for him to practice it. I ſpeak to put Men in action, and not meerly to ſpeak: This is the only Spirit of Intereſt which animates my advices. I am not very haſty in adviſing any Body that deſires it; I never do it without a previous careful Examination, and a ſerious Attention. A Man who is very ready to give advice, ſhews thereby that he does not ſee very

very far, and that he is ſoon reſolved, becauſe he is not able to diſtinguiſh all the different Faces of an Affair. He that will give good advice, ought to know throughly the thing in queſtion, and the ſtrength of the Perſon who undertakes it. If I think my ſelf indiſpenſably obliged to adviſe a greater Man than my ſelf, I don't ſeem to adviſe him, but only to put him in mind of what he had forgot; being perſwaded that whoever pretends to know more than Great Men, will be very unacceptable to them; and that many of 'em are never willing to ask advice, but when they are reſolved to do a Man ſome miſchief, and to put an ill deſign in execution, to the end that the Adviſer may draw upon himſelf the hatred of thoſe that are diſcontented.

MAXIM III.

A Man ought to be wiſe, or, if he is not, he ought to be adviſed by thoſe who are ſo.

REFLECTION.

LET us do our ſelves Juſtice, and not think our ſelves to be ſo wiſe, as to preſume that we want the help of no Body for the Conduct of our lives. Whatever Capacity we may pretend to, (a Capacity which will appear to us to be very inconſiderable, if we reflect upon ſo many falſe

ſteps

ſteps we have made) let us confeſs, as we know by our own experience, that it is very often impoſſible for us to be clear-ſighted, becauſe we are blinded by our Paſſions; or to follow the ſtraight way, becauſe they put us out of it; or to reaſon well, becauſe they make us very unreaſonable: And therefore why ſhou'd we neglect the advices of thoſe, who being not poſſeſt with the ſame unruly Paſſions, can make a better uſe of their Knowledge and Capacity? If we are truly deſirous of Perfection, it matters not whether we attain to it by our help, or by the help of others, provided we attain to it? But are we really deſirous of Perfection? We may very well doubt of it, if we conſider thoſe who ask advice, and thoſe who give it. In effect, let us examine a Man who is going to be adviſed, and another who prepares himſelf to adviſe him: The firſt appears with ſo reſpectuous a deference, that one would think he will approve every thing that ſhall be told him; he ſays that he comes in order to receive the Inſtructions he wants for his Conduct, not thinking himſelf capable to inſtruct himſelf; but if one cou'd dive into his Thoughts, it wou'd be found that he comes with no other deſign but to get his Sentiments approved, and to make, in ſome meaſure, the Man whom he conſults anſwerable for the Event. The ſecond, that is, the adviſing Man, pays at firſt the confidence his Friend places in him, with ſeveral marks

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of an eager, ſincere and unintereſted Zeal; but his Zeal is excited by ſomething elſe, ſeeing his own Intereſt is the rule of his advices, and at laſt, when the affair in queſtion has been examin'd ſeveral times, and after much diſcourſe, he thinks that the moſt acceptable advice he can give the Man who ſeems to deſire it, is to adviſe him to do what he pleaſes. This is the common Fate of advices: They are deſired and given, but they are ill received, and conſequently rejected. I endeavour to make an exception to that Rule, which is but too general. I do ſincerely deſire to be adviſed; I hear Attentively, and I receive with Civility and Thankfulneſs the advices that are given me; I examine 'em without any prejudices, and I think it my Duty to follow them, if, after all thoſe Precautions, I am perſwaded that they are advantageous to me.

XXI. *The Reprimanding Man.*

MAXIM I.

We ought to reprimand weak Men with Condeſcention, tractable Men with Simplicity, refractory Men with Authority, and all of 'em with Prudence and Circumſpection.

REFLECTION.

THe only thing we ought to aim at in our Reprimands, is to render Men better, and more reaſonable than they are. In order thereunto, we muſt be free from Paſſions, and hearken only to Reaſon: 'Tis only by conſulting Reaſon, that we can make other Men reaſonable. They, who are reprimanded, are but too much inclined to oppoſe the advices we give 'em; therefore we muſt take care not to confirm them in their obſtinacy, by any motives and ſteps, which may appear to them contrary to ſincerity and uprightneſs. We ought to have ſome regard to their weakneſs and prejudices, and make a good uſe of their attention, and of the confidence which they repoſe in us. When we put 'em in mind of their Duty, let us do it in ſuch a manner, that if they are not the better for it, it be rather their fault than ours. Whilſt we go about to reform them,

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we muſt not give 'em occaſion to find fault with our way of doing it. In order to avoid ſuch an inconveniency, I uſe the following Precautions in all my Reprimands.

1. I conſider whether it be my Duty to reprove a Man who deſerves it; and whether I ſhall work more upon him than others, to whom I might leave the care of doing it.

2. I endeavour as much as I can to ſay or do nothing, that may ſpoil the advices I give him. How cou'd he be diſpoſed to believe what I tell him, if he ſaw that I do what he does?

3. I cenſure others in the ſame manner as I cenſure my ſelf, that is, by being as tender of their Reputation as I am of mine. *N.* has been ſo often cenſured in Publick by his Superiour, that he is now no more aſhamed of a Reprimand: So true it is, that a cenſure will do more harm than good, unleſs it be managed with great Prudence.

4. *N.* is very willing to hear my cenſures, becauſe he knows that I praiſe him, when he deſerves it. He is perſwaded, that ſeeing I praiſe him willingly, I never blame him but with reluctancy, and that I am more deſirous to reform him than to reprove him.

5. Some few Praiſes before a Reprimand, will wonderfully inſinuate it into one's mind. When I ſay to *N.* that he is natu-

rally a ſincere upright Man, that I know it; and when I reprove him afterwards, and ſeem to lay the fault upon his ignorance, or upon ſome ill Examples, he appears to me to approve what I ſay, and to be willing to do what I require of him. When I put a Man in mind of the good Actions he has done, I inſpire him with a greater averſion to thoſe for which I reprove him.

6. I avoid in all my Reprimands, every thing that looks like Jeſting and Railing: Such Inſults will only make a Man refractory.

7. I had rather reprove my Friends in Proſperity, than in Adverſity; they ſtand more in need of it; Affliction is commonly attended with Correction: A Reprimand ſeems to be cruel to thoſe, who lye under great Affliction.

8. To reprimand a Man at Table, is a very improper and unſeaſonable thing: Such reprimands have an air of ſeverity, which does not become thoſe, who meet for their Diverſion.

9. If I ſee my Friend juſtly cenſured, but publickly, I blame ſuch a publick reprimand, and yet I reprove him in private.

10. I take great care not to reprove a Husband before his Wife, a Wife before her Husband, a Father before his Children, and a Maſter before his Servants: One may eaſily perceive the Reaſon of it.

11. I ſeldom reprove any Body for ſome ſmall faults, that I may reprove him more powerfully for ſome conſiderable faults.

12. I uſe as much moderation and gentleneſs as I can, when I reprove a Man for ſome faults, which he has committed: But I am earneſt, hot, and inexorable, when I deſign to hinder him from committing a fault, which I know he has a mind to commit.

13. Too great a ſeverity in our reproofs, will often produce a pernicious effect: it frightens ſo much thoſe, who deſerve to be reproved for ſome faults which they have committed, that they uſe all the Art they are capable of to conceal them, and ſo make 'em incurable. The greateſt puniſhment I cou'd inflict upon *N.* was to appear melancholy before him, by reaſon of a fault which I knew he had committed. My ſilence, on ſuch an occaſion, was as powerful as a ſevere reprimand.

14. I take care, when I reprimand any Body, to diſtinguiſh well the faults which proceed from Idleneſs, Ignorance, want of Attention and Malice. Such a diſtinction is neceſſary, to make a good Reprimand.

MAXIM II.

They, who deſerve moſt to be Praiſed, will bear a Reprimand with more patience.

REFLECTION.

I Know no Men more tractable, when they are reproved, than thoſe, who deſerve moſt to be praiſed: They love Perfection; and therefore they are worthy of Praiſe. A reproof affords 'em the means of acquiring what they love; and therefore they don't take it ill to be reproved.

1. It is not enough for me to know my faults, I will not excuſe any of 'em. No Man can pretend to attain to Perfection, when he excuſes ſome faults which keep him from it. If I did excuſe my faults, I wou'd not forgive thoſe, who reprove me for them.

2. I do ingenuouſly confeſs that I am in the wrong, when I know my faults: I eaſily know them, becauſe I believe I may commit them. He, who has been ſo bold as to do an ill Action, ought to be patient enough, to ſuffer himſelf to be reproved for it.

3. *N.* told me that I am guilty of a fault; I believe more of it than he tells me; for I have learn'd by experience, that they who give ſuch admonitions, have commonly

ly ſome regard to the niceneſs and ſelf-love of thoſe whom they admoniſh.

4. I rather avoid thoſe who flatter me, than thoſe who reprove me; becauſe the former make me quite another Man than I am; whereas the latter help me to know my ſelf, and conſequently to be ſuch as I deſire to be. He, that loves to be reproved, will in time deſerve to be praiſed: And the more we ſhun a praiſing Flatterer, the leſs we avoid a reproving Friend.

5. I give the liberty to reprove me for my faults, becauſe I eaſily yield to thoſe, who reprove me: (*Mont. l.* 3.) "Loving "to gratify and keep up the liberty of ad- "moniſhing me, by my facility of yielding. I reprove and condemn my ſelf ſo often, that I don't take it ill to be reproved and condemned by others.

XXII. *The Inſtructing Man.*

MAXIM I.

You ought to be well Inſtructed, before you Inſtruct others.

REFLECTION.

TO Inſtruct a Man, is to teach him what he does not know; one ought therefore to be well inſtructed in what he

is ignorant of. The ignorance, which we ſuppoſe in the Man who is inſtructed, requires a great many Talents to inſtruct him well: For one muſt, if I may ſay ſo, mollify his mind, if it be hard, to make Impreſſion upon it; one muſt enlarge it, if it be narrow; make it tractable, if it be not pliant; clear, if it be obſcure; and attentive, if it be wandering: All thoſe things are neceſſary, to give him ſome new Notions, to ſupply his Expreſſions, to remove his Objections, and to reſolve his Doubts: Laſtly, one muſt have a plentiful ſtock of all ſorts of neceſſary knowledge, to produce thoſe effects in him, and not put off acquiring of it, till we know that he ſtands in need of it. The Reaſon why ſo few Men are well inſtructed, is becauſe few of thoſe, who inſtruct 'em, uſe ſuch Precautions; being contented to ſatisfy their Vanity or Intereſt, without much caring whether thoſe, who are under their Conduct, will be benefited by it. How many Men have I ſeen, who have confirmed the common Saying, that many People will meddle with things which they don't underſtand!

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MAXIM II.

In order to diſpoſe Men to receive Inſtruction, we muſt win their affection, before we require of them that they ſhou'd perform their Duty.

REFLECTION.

BEcauſe, when Men are won, they are more inclin'd to practice what is required of 'em; they contribute as much to their own Inſtruction by their Attention, Patience, Aſſiduity and Eagerneſs, as thoſe who inſtruct 'em; for the right way to do a thing well, is to do it willingly. When a Maſter, or a Superiour is well beloved, he is always willingly heard, and willingly obey'd; the pleaſure of ſeeing and hearing him, ſweetens the bitterneſs of his Inſtructions, and facilitates the Exerciſe thereof; the eſteem and affection which Men have for him, makes 'em love and eſteem every thing he ſays. Becauſe he has won them, he diſpoſes of 'em at his pleaſure; his Authority appears to them ſo ſweet, that they will never oppoſe it: The Obedience which they pay to him, is rather an effect of their Inclination, than of a ſlaviſh fear of his Power: Becauſe they eſteem and love him, every thing that comes from him appears to them lovely and worthy of eſteem. But, what muſt one do, to ſucceed in his Inſtructions? I ſhall ſet down what I have done, and what I do, when I think

think my ſelf obliged to inſtruct any Body: As I have been ſatisfied with my Conduct, ſo the deſire I have to be ſerviceable to thoſe, who ſhall read this Book, moves me to communicate it to them; in hopes, that if it be not a perfect Inſtruction for them, it will become more perfect, becauſe they will perhaps find out ſomething better.

1. I look upon the Inſtruction which I give, as a Duty which I think my ſelf obliged to diſcharge; and therefore I diſcharge it heartily, ſincerely, and with a good Will; ſo that the perſon whom I inſtruct, perceiving my Zeal, is animated to anſwer it with the ſame Ardour, and with ſo much the greater Eagerneſs, becauſe he ought to know, that it is more his Intereſt to follow my inſtruction, than 'tis mine to inſtruct him. There is nothing, in my Opinion, that will make a greater Impreſſion upon Men, and move 'em more powerfully to perform their Duty, than to ſhew them by a ſincere indifferency for one's ſelf, that one requires it of 'em, only for their own Intereſt.

2. I take great care to know well the Genius, Inclinations, Humours, and prevailing Paſſions of thoſe, whom it is my Duty to inſtruct. It is ſo neceſſary to know the Character of thoſe, who are inſtructed by us, that our inſtructions will often prove ineffectual, for want of ſuch a knowledge; for if we don't know well the Character of

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a Man, we don't know how to conform our ſelves to his way, how to accommodate our ſelves to his capacity, how to require nothing from him but what he can do, and how to put him in the way of doing it: inſtead of prevailing with him, we diſguſt, and diſcourage him; and he makes a reſiſtance, which we muſt continually oppoſe, and which proves at laſt inſurmountable. If you go too faſt with a ſlow Man, you leave him a great way behind you: If you go ſlowly with a quick Man, he ſpends part of the time in thinking of quite another thing than what you tell him. If you deal haughtily with a proud Man, he thinks only of raiſing himſelf againſt you by his diſobedience, becauſe you ſeem to be willing to depreſs him by your haughty Manners. Too much fear will trouble the mind of a timorous Man. You'll never prevail upon an Opiniater, if you affect to contradict him at all times. You will continually afflict a chearful Man, if you don't leave off your grave, ſerious and melancholy tone. You'll make a melancholy Man mad, if you uſe him always with a ſad ſeverity. We ought therefore to know well a Man whom we inſtruct, that we may not inſtruct him in vain: But in order to know him well, let him have the liberty from time to time (without perceiving your deſign) to ſhew himſelf ſuch as he is; that he may appear without diſguiſe and diſſimulation, and that you may judge, by what he does then, of what he is capable to do. 3. It

3. It is alſo neceſſary, in order to win Men ſo, as to move 'em Powerfully to diſcharge their Duties, it is, I ſay, neceſſary to behave our ſelves in ſuch a manner, that they may not obſerve any thing in us, which may give 'em occaſion to doubt of the neceſſity of performing thoſe Duties: They'll never be well convinced of that neceſſity, unleſs it appears to them, that we are perfectly convinced of it; and therefore the Practice muſt not contradict the Theory. Our Actions muſt not be inconſiſtent with our Words; we muſt not be angry, when we prove that Men ought not to be overcome by Anger. 'Tis in vain for us to uſe ſuch Arguments as ſeem to be unanſwerable; if our Conduct be contrary to them, it will work more powerfully upon others, than all our Arguments. I think one might very well tell me in ſuch a Caſe: "What! Do you pretend that I ſhou'd "believe you, when you adviſe me to pra-"ctice Virtue; and it appears to me, that "you your-ſelf do not believe what you "ſay? How can I be perſwaded that you "believe what you ſay, ſeeing your Acti-"ons prove that you believe the contrary? "Do you deſign to increaſe the Merit of "my belief, by a Conduct oppoſite to your "Maxims? But when Inſtructions and Advices are attended and ſtrengthened with Actions, they leave no room for unbelief, but they force Men, if I may ſay ſo, to approve them; or if they make any oppoſi-

tion

tion to them, 'tis becauſe the violent and tumultuous motions, which are excited by their Paſſions, hinder 'em from being perſwaded by Reaſon, We muſt then be patient, till they recover their tranquility, that their Minds may freely exerciſe their functions.

4 They, who are inſtructed, will make a more ſolid and laſting progreſs, if they are governed by Reaſon, than if they are diſcouraged by fear. "Young Boys are properly kept in a Priſon; (ſays *Montagne*, L. 1. c. 21. ſpeaking of the ſeverity wherewith "ſome Maſters uſe Children) if you come "there upon the point of their Office, you "ſhall hear nothing but the cries of Children, who are laſhed, and of Maſters, "who are mad with anger. How can it be "expected that thoſe poor fearful Souls "ſhou'd be encouraged to mind their Book, "with dreadful looks, and Hands armed "with Whips? If they are only governed by fear, they'll follow ill courſes, aſſoon as their fear is over; and it is certain that it will be over in a little time. But if they are ſober, becauſe they are convinced by Reaſon, that they ought to be ſo; and if out of love for Reaſon, they ſubmit to the inſtructions that are given 'em, without being forced to it by the Authority of their Maſters; one may reaſonably hope that they will obſerve the ſame inſtructions better, than if Fear and Terrour had been the only motive of their obedience. "Never

"ver put on, without a great neceſſity for "it, a ſevere and imperious countenance, "which makes Children tremble; it is of- "ten a piece of affectation and pedantry in "their Governours; for Children are com- "monly but too timorous and baſhful: It "wou'd diſcourage 'em and leſſen their con- "fidence, without which no advantage can "be expected from their Education. En- "deavour to get their love; let them "be free with you, and not at all afraid "to let you ſee their Faults. That you "may ſucceed in it, be indulgent to thoſe, who "don't diſſemble before you: Don't ſeem "to wonder at, or to be angry with their "bad inclinations; on the contrary, bear "with their weakneſs: There will ariſe "ſometimes an inconveniency from it, they "will be leſs kept in awe: But, in the main, "confidence and ſincerity are more uſeful to "them, than a rigorous authority. *Educat. des Filles p.* 50.

5. When I deſign to inſtruct a Man, I endeavour before hand to make him deſirous of my inſtructions, that he may be the better for them: In order to it, I avoid thoſe ſtrained expreſſions of Regularity, which diſcourage Men, and will only render Virtue odious, and make one believe that 'tis impoſſible to practice it. We diſcourage Men, when we undertake to inſpire 'em with love for Virtue, and when at the ſame time, we make the way to it too difficult. "Some Men teach Wiſ- "dom ſo aukwardly, that they make one "be-

"believe that it is a thing, which is learn'd "with great difficulty, and is of no great uſe "to thoſe who have learn'd it. *Sen. Ep.* 71. *N.* 3.

6. It is alſo neceſſary, in order to make a Man willing to hear the advices that are given him, to ſhew him the advantages that will accrue to him by it; that he may be encouraged to overcome the difficulties of ſtudy. We muſt always aim at ſomething in all our Actions; without ſuch a precaution, we don't know whither we are going: We don't love to make any Steps that are of no uſe to us.

7. I obſerve further, that Clearneſs, Rules, and Order ought not to be neglected by thoſe, who inſtruct others; if they do ſincerely deſire that their inſtructions may be uſeful to them. Let us ſuppoſe at all times, (and perhaps we ſhall never be miſtaken,) that thoſe, who ſtand in need of our inſtructions, want attention, judgment, or inclination; that we may excite their attention by clearneſs, ſupply the weakneſs of their Judgment by Rules, and raiſe their inclination by Order. He, who finds no obſcurity in what he muſt learn, will not refuſe to apply himſelf to it; becauſe ſuch an application will not tire him much. He, who is directed by Rules, will follow the way he is put in, with leſs danger of loſing it, tho' his knowledge be never ſo little; becauſe the way is more ſtrait. He, who follows a certain Order, makes every Step without pains; becauſe he uſes himſelf

to

to it inſenſibly: Order begets a certain Habit, which renders affiduity leſs laborious. To conclude, let us be perſwaded, that Men are willing to practice what they have willingly heard.

MAXIM III.

When you inſtruct others, be always ſo much Maſter of your ſelf, as to give no hold to impatience.

REFLECTION.

THere are commonly in thoſe, who are inſtructed, ſo many difficulties to be ſurmounted, ſo many contradictions to be overcome, and ſo many ill diſpoſitions to be rooted out, that if a Man be not well armed with patience, he will be apt to fall into a Paſſion, which depriving him of the uſe of Reaſon, will at the ſame time diſable him from making others reaſonable. We have already ſaid, that when we inſtruct any Body, we muſt endeavour to win him, to accommodate our ſelves to his capacity, to have ſome regard to his diſpoſition, to give him good example, to obſerve ſome Rules, to follow a certain Order, and to ſay or do nothing that may diſcourage him: All thoſe precautions are certainly inconſiſtent with the impetuous and unruly motions of Impatience. The remonſtrances, that

that are made in the midſt of ſo much trouble and confuſion, are look'd upon as ſo many injuries, as ſo many reſentments, and as ſo many productions, which ſeem rather to proceed from a furious and malicious Paſſion, than from a ſedate and calm Reaſon. "† For example, the Reaſon why "Children are ſeldom better for the remon-"ſtrances, that are made to them, is be-"cauſe they perceive that their Maſters "will rather chide 'em, becauſe they find "their faults troubleſome, than becauſe they "are dangerous, and that they are repro-"ved rather out of Paſſion, than out of "Juſtice. But Patience enables us to be as much Maſters of other Men, as we are of our ſelves. A Man, who has the command of himſelf, holds, if I may ſay ſo all his Talents in his Hands, to diſpoſe of 'em at his pleaſure, with a wiſe and prudent diſcretion, as occaſion and neceſſity require. † *Maximes ſur l' Education.*

MAXIM III.

Whilſt you imprint the knowledge of Juſtice in the Minds of thoſe whom you inſtruct, take care to form in them the Habit of that Virtue.

REFLECTION.

IT is a good thing to give ſome judicious Rules to thoſe whom we inſtruct,

to fill their Minds with wiſe Maxims, to ſtrengthen 'em with ſolid Principles, to teach 'em their Duty, and convince 'em of the obligation that lies upon them, to diſcharge it; but it is better ſtill to make 'em practice all thoſe inſtructions; which is a thing very ſeldom obſerved. *Montagne* ſpeaks of that negligence in a very pleaſing manner. "(*L.* 1. *c.* 25.) I wou'd have, "ſays he, *Palues* or *Pompey*, thoſe two fine "Dancers of our time, teach us to Caper, "only by ſeeing them do ſo, and without "ſtirring from our places; as theſe Men "will inform our underſtandings without "moving them: Or I wou'd have a Man "teach us how to mannage a Horſe, a Pike, "a Lute, or the Voice, without exerci-"ſing our ſelves in thoſe things; as theſe "Men will teach us to judge and ſpeak "well, without exerciſing us in judging and "ſpeaking. Did ever any Maſter ask his "Diſciple, what he thinks of Rhetorick and "Grammar, and of ſuch and ſuch ſaying "of *Cicero*? They clap 'em on our Me-"mory as ſo many Oracles. They are con-"tinually bawling in our Ears, as if they "were pouring into a Funnel; and our Task "is only to repeat what we have been told. "I wou'd have a Maſter alter his Method "in this point, and I wiſh that from the "very beginning, he wou'd uſe a Boy, com-"mitted to his care, to reliſh things, and "to chooſe and diſcern them of himſelf, "ſometimes opening the way to him, and ſome-

"ſometimes letting him open it. I wou'd
" not have him ſpeak alone: I will have
"him hear his Diſciple ſpeak in his turn.
" Let him trot before him, that he may
" judge of his Pace, and how far he ought
" to accommodate himſelf to his Capacity:
" We ſpoil all, for want of ſuch a Method.
Without Practice, Duties will be neglected, Principles will prove ineffectual, Maxims will be forgotten, and a Man will wander, tho' he has learn'd the beſt Rules, that he can make uſe of, for his Conduct. It is not enough to inform his Mind, we muſt alſo put him in the way of practiſing what he has learn'd, that we may know whether he can make a good uſe of it, and we muſt beget in him a Habit of Practice, which ought to be the chief aim of all his Speculations, and of all his Studies. Memory is look'd upon as a Magazine, which is ſtored with ſeveral ſorts of things; but all thoſe things are no farther uſeful, than they ſerve in a judicious Commerce. "*(Mont. l. 1. c. 25.)*
" To know a thing by Heart, is not true
" Knowledge, tis only keeping what has been
" committed to Memory: He that knows
" a thing well, can diſpoſe of it, without
" looking upon the Pattern, without caſting
" his Eyes upon his Book. A meer Book-
" iſh Learning is not ſufficient: Let it ſerve
" as an Ornament, but not as a Foundati-
" on; let a Man learn ſome Hiſtories, but
" let him rather learn how to judge of 'em.
Teach the Perſon, committed to your care,

he ought to reaſon; but make him reaſon at the ſame time; acquaint him with all the ſeveral opinions of Men, about the ſubject you treat of, but ask him his own opinion. "We muſt, ſays *Charron*, (*L.* 3. *c.* 14. *n.* 28.) "awaken 'em by asking them ſeveral Que- "ſtions, and deſire 'em to give their opinion "firſt, and even allow them the Liberty "to make ſeveral enquiries, and to open the "way, whenever they have a Mind to it. "If you ſpeak always to them, without hear- "ing them ſpeak in their turn, it will be "almoſt to no purpoſe; a Boy will never "be the better for it, becauſe he thinks that "he has no ſhare in it; he only hears it, "and yet but coldly; he is not fond of it, "as when he puts in for one; nor is it e- "nough to ask their opinion, for they muſt "always give a reaſon for it; that they may "not ſpeak perfunctorily, but be careful and "attentive to what they ſay; and in order "to encourage 'em, you muſt not ſlight "what they ſay.---Whenever they mention "any thing, that is to be found in Books, "as in *Cicero* and *Ariſtotle*, they muſt not "only mention it, but alſo judge of it; "and therefore let him turn it ſeveral ways, "and apply it to ſeveral Subjects. It is not "enough to relate as a Hiſtory, that *Cato* "kill'd himſelf at *Utica*, for fear of falling "into the Hands of *Cæſar*, and that *Brutus* "and *Caſſius* were the Authors of *Cæſar*'s "death; but I wou'd have him try them, "and judge whether they did well in that;

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"whether they deſerved well of the Pub-
"lick, or not; whether they went about
"it with Prudence, Juſtice and Valour;
"and wherein they did well or ill: Laſtly,
"you muſt require of him that he ſhou'd
"ſpeak pertinently, truly and methodically
"in all his Diſcourſes, Queſtions and An-
"ſwers. You muſt not diſſemble with him
"in any one of thoſe things, but preſs him
"hard, and keep him cloſe to it. Shew
him what Equity, Prudence, and Wiſdom
are; but engage him to do ſome actions
whereby he may prove that he is Wiſe,
Prudent and Equitable: He muſt not only
learn how to ſpeak, but alſo ſpeak; and
he muſt not only ſpeak but alſo do. (*Mont.
L.* 1. *c.* 25.) "He, who puts his Leſ-
"ſon in practice, has made a greater pro-
"greſs, than he who can only ſay it: If
"you ſee him, you hear him; he will not
"ſo much ſay his Leſſon, as do it, he will
"repeat it in his Actions. The reaſon why
there are ſo few Learned Men, is, be-
cauſe moſt of 'em are contented to learn
what others have ſaid, without ſaying any
thing of their own: They follow the ſame
opinions that are commonly received, with-
out giving their own opinion. Whatever
reaſonings they may make, they don't rea-
ſon at all, becauſe others reaſon for them:
Their Memory is very active, but their
Judgment is ſo idle, that it will be always
barren, becauſe they never took care to cul-
tivate it. Becauſe all their ſtudy conſiſts

in Repetitions, every thing, that appears new to them, alarms 'em; and if it does not raiſe their indignation, it will at leaſt excite their contempt: Their deciſions conſiſt only in approving what has been decided by others; and they fancy that the beſt Reaſons they can alledge, are thoſe which they have learn'd. The ſame indifferency for the Practice, is alſo the Reaſon, why there is ſo few truly wiſe Men. For moſt of 'em having learn'd only to diſcourſe well of Wiſdom, have altogether neglected the exerciſe of it; they do indeed perfectly know the Difinitions of the moſt excellent Virtues, the worth of the fineſt Maxims, the advantage that may be reaped from them, and how they may be practiced, but they have made it ſo long and ſerious a ſtudy to diſcourſe well of 'em, that they have not given themſelves the time, nor ſo much as vouchſafed to ſhew the uſe of 'em in their Conduct: And ſo Virtue going only from Mouth to Mouth, makes no ſtay in the Mind. It conſiſts only in Words, and does not appear in Men's Actions. This is one of the cauſes of the ignorance and depravation of Men: Let us therefore exerciſe by a continual Practice thoſe, whom we are obliged to teach Learning and Virtue: Without ſuch a precaution, the Learned Men who ſhall come out of our Schools, will be meer Babblers, and the Virtuous meer Hypocrites.

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MAXIM V.

The beſt Inſtructions are thoſe, which are grounded upon the ſolid Principles of Religion.

REFLECTION.

THe moſt ſolid Inſtructions are thoſe, which are grounded upon Religion; becauſe Religion being the Fountain of Truth and Juſtice, our Intentions, when directed by it, are always right, our deſigns lawful, and our actions equitable; and our whole Conduct is agreeable to that Order, which is abſolutely neceſſary to make us attain to Perfection. And 'tis upon the account of that Perfection, that it teaches us what we owe to God, to Men, and to our ſelves; and what is the ſafeſt way to diſcharge thoſe Duties. With the help of Religion, we ſhall not be deterred from the practice of Virtue, by any Humane conſiderations; becauſe it repreſents continually to us, the reſpect we owe to our God, who requires ſuch a Practice from us. Laſtly, Religion enables us to obſerve conſtantly the Laws, Precepts, Advices, and all the Inſtructions, whereby our Lives may be regulated; becauſe it is an eternal Rule, which is not capable of any alteration. Let us conſider thoſe, who are always guided and directed by Religion; and then we ſhall readily own all thoſe Truths, and conſequenly the truth

of our Maxim, that the beſt Inſtructions are thoſe, which are grounded upon the ſolid Principles of Religion.

XXIII. *The Man, who truſts others, or is truſted with a Secret.*

MAXIM I.

What we have been truſted with by others does not belong to us, it is a Sacred Thing, which we ought never to make uſe of.

REFLECTION.

IT is the Intereſt of the publick Society, to put Men in mind of the obligation that lies upon them, to keep the Secrets which they have been truſted with, for if ſuch a Faithfulneſs and Diſcretion are not recommended to 'em as a Duty, what will that Society be, but a Commerce of Treaſon, Frauds, and many other ſuch Diſorders? No body will deſire to be adviſed, in order to carry on his deſigns, nor ask any Remedy, to cure himſelf of his Faults, leſt they ſhou'd be diſcovered. Tho' a Man be never ſo wiſe, ſo prudent and ſo great a Politician, all his ſteps will be doubtful and uncertain; becauſe it will be a very difficult

cult thing for him to be ſecure from Knavery. Laſtly, Men will look upon one another, as ſo many unfaithful Friends, and diſguiſed Enemies; and ſo, inſtead of reliſhing the ſweetneſs of the Commerce of the World, they'll find nothing in it but a bitter hatred, and an unſurmountable Antipathy. We have a daily Experience of it, by the reſentment of thoſe, who have had their Secrets betray'd: A reſentment, which they expreſs by their contempt and averſion for thoſe indiſcreet Men: They look upon them as Inconſiderate Men, or Babblers, and therefore they deſpiſe 'em; or as Artificious and Treacherous Men, and therefore they hate 'em. This is the notion I always had of thoſe, who cannot keep a Secret, and that notion has inſpired me with ſo great a horror for them, that I am fully reſolved never to imitate them. Suppoſe a Man ſhou'd become ſo great an Enemy to me, as to perſecute me violently; yet I wou'd never be ſo treacherous as to revenge my ſelf upon him, by diſcovering a Secret wherewith he had truſted me. I receive a Secret as a Sacred *Depoſitum*, which I fancy I cannot touch, without committing a Sacrilege. Others may, if they pleaſe, alter their Conduct with reſpect to me; I ſhall not think for all that to have a right to alter a Duty of Diſcretion, which the publick Society requires of me; being fully convinced that an injuſtice againſt me wou'd not juſtify my unfaithfulneſs.

1. I ſhall willingly impart my Thoughts, my Deſires, my Intentions, my Deſigns, and even my Eſtate to my Friends, if they deſire it; but I ſhall always except the Secrets wherewith I have been truſted; becauſe the Laws of Friendſhip do not at all require of me, that I ſhou'd acquaint 'em with them; it is their Intereſt, upon the account of their own Secrets, not to induce me to ſuch an injuſtice.

2. Tho' the confidence that is repoſed in me, be never ſo inconſiderable, yet if it be attended with ſome ſecret Steps, I ſhall be ſure to ſay nothing of it. Having uſed my ſelf to be faithful in the leaſt things, I can eaſily preſerve an inviolable faithfulneſs in thoſe, which are more important; and I am ſo afraid to betray my ſelf, that I do continually miſtruſt all my ſteps, in order to regulate 'em ſo well, as to do and ſay nothing, whereby one may diſcover what I deſign to keep ſecret; and that he, who is moſt concern'd in my ſilence, perceiving nothing in me, that can put him in mind of the Secret wherewith he truſted me, may be induced to doubt of it, and obliged to look for it in his own memory, to be certain of it. The moſt curious and inquiſitive Men, are ſo far from diſcovering what I have been truſted with, that they cannot ſo much as know whether I have been truſted with any thing: Such a precaution makes one's Fidelity ſafer; for 'tis with a Secret as 'tis with a hidden Treaſure, when Peo-

People know that it is hidden, it is half diſcovered.

3. But whatever Diſcretion I may pretend to, about ſuch Secrets as I have been truſted with, I had rather have none to keep. I cou'd willingly ſpeak in theſe Words to thoſe who will truſt me with their moſt ſecret Intentions: "Believe me, don't "tell me your Secret, if you are willing "that you and I ſhou'd live quietly; if "you don't tell it, you will not be afraid "that I ſhou'd diſcover it, and I ſhall not "be afraid that you ſhou'd accuſe me of "having diſcovered it; for I think you "may as well impart it to another, as to "me, and if another Man diſcovers it, I "may be accuſed of it. To conclude, all thoſe Reflections confirm me in the practice of this fine Maxim concerning Secrets, *Neither to hear, nor to tell them.*

MAXIM. II.

Whoever imparts an important Secret to another Man, makes himſelf voluntarily his Slave.

REFLECTION.

NO Man ought therefore to impart his Secrets but with great precaution, and when there is a great neceſſity for it. In effect, it ſeems to me that we can never be

be too diſtruſtful and too cautious, when we go about to declare to a Friend ſuch things as would be prejudicial to us, if they were made publick. We muſt always weigh, with great exactneſs and a ſerious attention, the damage we might ſuſtain by ſuch a publick knowledge, and the advantage which might accrue to us by ſuch a confidence; leſt we ſhou'd indiſcreetly run the hazard of repenting of it in vain; becauſe the diſmal conſequences of our indiſcretion wou'd be irreparable

1. Let us reaſon thus within our ſelves: Whom ſhall I impart my Secret to? To a Fool; No, for he'll never be able to keep it: To whom then? To a Wiſe Man; a Wiſe Man is not always Wiſe: To whom ſhall I impart it at laſt? To my Friend; how can I be ſure that he will be always ſo?

2. If I impart my Secret to *N.* becauſe he is my Friend, *N.* will alſo impart it to *M.* becauſe he is his Friend, and *M.* to *O.* for the ſame Reaſon; and ſo my Secret is made publick, and yet every one of 'em pretends to be a faithful Man; becauſe he thinks he may lawfully truſt a Friend with it: For 'tis certain, that the moſt diſcreet Perſons have one or two intimate Friends, from whom they cannot conceal any thing. Thoſe Friends have alſo other particular Friends, in whom they do no leſs confide; and ſo the number of Friends increaſing by an infinite Series, the repetitions of a Secret in-

increaſe likewiſe; ſo that it will be found at laſt, that as the firſt Tile, which receives a drop of Water, imparting it to the next, imparts it to a third, and ſo on, till it be convey'd into the High-way; ſo a Secret goes about from Mouth to Mouth, and from Ear to Ear, and at laſt runs into the Streets and is made publick.

3. If I tell my Secret, why ſhou'd I be angry with the Perſon whom I truſted with it, becauſe he does not keep it? Why do I tell it, if no body ought to know it? If I give the keeping of my Secret to another Man, I muſt needs confide more in him than in my ſelf. If he is not a more diſcreet Man, than I am, why ſhou'd I complain of him? It is not ſo much his Intereſt as mine: It were in vain for me to require that another Man ſhou'd be diſcreet, if I am not ſo. If he ſhou'd prove faithful to me, I might very well wonder at it, ſeeing he wou'd be more faithful to me, than I am to my ſelf. I ſhall be ſure that no Body will diſcover my Secret, if I diſcover it to no Body.

4. I ſhall never truſt a Man with my Secret, when he truſts me with his, without knowing me well; becauſe I am perſwaded, that ſeeing he tells me his Secret, without knowing me well, he may as well tell mine to another, without knowing him at all.

XXIV. *The Tongue of Women.*

MAXIM I.

Women wou'd not be ſo much deſpiſed by Men, if they did not ſay ſo many things, that deſerve to be deſpiſed.

REFLECTION.

IT is certain, that moſt Men glory in expreſſing their contempt for Women in general, whilſt in particular, they behave themſelves towards them, as if they eſteem'd them more than themſelves: Whether ſuch a contempt is an effect of Reaſon, and ſuch an eſteem an effect of Paſſion, may be the Subject of a Diſſertation, which I don't deſign to inlarge upon. I ſhall only ſay at preſent, that Men ſhou'd not in Honour ſpeak of Women with ſo much contempt, or ſhou'd not love 'em ſo paſſionately. If they pretend that the weakneſs of Women makes 'em contemptible, how will they be able to prove, that they themſelves are not contemptible by reaſon of the weakneſs which they ſhew to them? How can they juſtify the Empire which Women exerciſe over them? An Empire ſo true and ſo real, that Men are

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ſo far from diſowning it, that on the contrary, they are willing to ſhew that they love to ſubmit to it, and to feel the whole Authority of it. That Empire appears ſo often, and ſo many different ways, that moſt great Events, as well as little ones, which we obſerve in the World, are begun, carried on, or brought to a concluſion upon the account of ſome Women. They turn, as they pleaſe, the deſigns of the moſt cunning Politicians; they make the moſt ſerious Philoſophers lay aſide their Gravity; they overcome the moſt Warlike Men, and put in diſorder thoſe, who profeſs the moſt exact regularity. Women will break the beſt Projects by their Preſence, Triumph over the nobleſt Reſolutions by a meer Look, and deſtroy the moſt inveterate Habits of Virtue by a ſlight mark of Affection. A Man will do, and undertake any thing, to pleaſe a Woman who has won his Heart: She tames the wildeſt, ſhe ſoftens the moſt cruel; ſhe humanizes the greateſt *Miſanthropes*; ſhe diſarms the moſt Furious; ſhe afflicts the moſt Jovial; ſhe rejoyces the moſt Melancholy; ſhe poliſhes the moſt Clowniſh: There are few Men, but will praiſe Women; there are few Hearts, but will fetch Sighs for them; they will bring down the Pride and Haughtineſs of the greateſt and moſt illuſtrious Men. Aſſoon as they pleaſe, (and they ſeldom fail to pleaſe, when they have a mind to it) all their Faults vaniſh away;

away; the Eyes of Men are intent upon their Merit, if they have any; or, they fancy that they ſee a great Merit in them, tho they have none. After ſo many advantages, which Women have above Men, let us confeſs that if Men deſpiſe 'em, they give occaſion to be themſelves very much deſpiſed. Their contempt of Women is a proof of the contempt which they deſerve: ſeeing a Man, who ſubmits himſelf to a Woman, muſt needs be weaker than ſhe, who ſubmits him, and conſequently more contemptible. As long as Women have the power to Conquer Men, they may very well laugh at their Satyrs and Invectives; Men may ridicule Women in their abſence, as much as they pleaſe; but Women will have the Pleaſure to make 'em weep in their preſence; Men will depreſs Women by their Words, but Women will humble Men by their Actions. Laſtly, the Submiſſion, Complaiſance and Reſpect, which they'll force Men to pay to them, will make amends for their contempt of 'em. "(*St.* "*Evremond.*) Men may ſay what they "pleaſe; but it is leſs impoſſible to find in "a Woman the ſtrongeſt and ſoundeſt Rea-"ſon of Men, than to find in a Man, the "natural charms of Women. Such a difference, wherein the force of Women, and the weakneſs of Men conſiſts, will always make the former ſo much ſuperiour to the latter, as to extort from them an Obedience, which is as good as their eſteem.

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But let us make ſome Reflections upon our Maxim. Becauſe Women, according to our Laws and Cuſtoms, are not allowed to have any ſhare in the Adminiſtration of the moſt important Affairs; the Education that is beſtowed upon them, is ſuited to ſuch things as are permitted to them, and which ſeem to be very inconſiderable, if compared with thoſe, wherein they have no ſhare. Such an Education, which fits 'em only for mean and inconſiderable things, contributes to their frequent ſpeaking of ſeveral things which running upon contemptible Subjects, expoſe 'em to the contempt of Men. Don't we ſee now and then ſome Men, who having had almoſt the ſame Education, diſcourſe after the ſame manner, and ſo pitifully, that they are deſpiſed by thoſe, who have had a more manly, ſerious, and noble Education? So true it is, that Women wou'd be more eſteem'd, if they had been uſed to things more worthy of eſteem. We muſt not refuſe to do them that Juſtice, upon the account of ſome of 'em, who diſtinguiſhing themſelves from others by their Conduct, give us occaſion to believe, that they have generally ſome diſpoſitions, which wou'd be more advantageous to them, if they were better cultivated, or if they wou'd be above the little things, which have been the principal Obect of their Application and Study. When Women ſpeak of trifling things, I don't conſider ſo much what they ſay, as

what they might ſay, had they had a better Education; and I do really believe, that they wou'd be more ſolid in their diſcourſes, if their Occupations were more ſolid; and that they wou'd be employed in things more ſolid, if it was required of 'em, or if they wou'd give themſelves that trouble. It is true, that they will not do it very willingly, not only becauſe Men are ſo far from requiring it, that they exempt 'em from it, and make 'em aſhamed, when they go about it; but alſo becauſe ſuch a trouble does not very well agree with the ſoft, eaſy and idle life, which they have been uſed to. Perhaps it wou'd not be improper, (in order to excite 'em to make ſome efforts) to flatter 'em, by repreſenting to them the delicacy of their expreſſions, which is ſo natural to them, and the ingaging and perſuaſive way, which they underſtand ſo well; perhaps, I ſay, it wou'd not be improper to flatter 'em with the hopes of equalling Men, whenever they will undertake ſome great things. They ſhou'd at leaſt try what they can do, but they muſt uſe theſe precautions; they muſt have a great capacity, without pretending to it; they muſt avoid an affected and preciſe way, which will only ſpoil their beſt qualities; and they muſt not fall into the ridiculouſneſs of thoſe half Learned Men, who have a great deal of Vanity, becauſe they have a little Learning.

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MAXIM II.

There is no Secret, which a Woman will keep better, than that of her Age.

REFLECTION.

IT may be true, that Women love to ſpeak, becauſe having but little to do, they indemnify themſelves by their Words. It may be true likewiſe, that if they love to ſpeak, they will not keep a Secret which they have been truſted with, when they have nothing elſe to ſay. But without diſcuſſing the matter, let us ſay only that they will keep very faithfully the Secret of their Age; when they can reckon more Years than they deſire to have. They are ſo far from diſcovering that Secret, that they uſe all ſorts of artifices to conceal it; 'tis in order to it, that they uſe Red and White Paint, Primming, and Fineries; that they keep Company with the oldeſt Women, and remove the youngeſt. A Mother for example, having her Mind taken up with the love of herſelf, and being jealous of a vain and ridiculous reputation of Youth, which is contradicted by her outſide, to keep out of the way her Daughter, who diſpleaſes her, as being an Object, the preſence whereof deſtroys the flattering opinion ſhe wou'd give of her Age, confines her into a ſolitude, that ſhe may re-

main in the World with leſs reproach, and more pleaſure and liberty: This ſhe does, becauſe it is the common opinion, that young Women only are lovely, and becauſe Men, without examining whether that opinion be well grounded or not, believe that they ought to love none but young Women. Being thus prejudiced, they don't conſider that the youth of Women paſſes away, whilſt their bad qualities remain, if they have any, and ſtick ſo conſtantly to them, that they never fail to turn the love of Men into indifferency, if not into averſion: Which is a fatal effect of a Man's love, when 'tis only produced by ſome tranſient Charms. But opinion prevails, and will perhaps always prevail upon thoſe Reaſonings, and ſo will always afford Women ſome ſpecious pretences to hide the number of their Years, when it exceeds the term which opinion has preſcribed to them in order to pleaſe. Why don't Men tell 'em, that they may get their love by ſome Qualities more ſolid, if they deſire that they ſhou'd be ſincere in what concerns their Age? If they deceive Men therein, 'tis becauſe they are in a manner forced by Men to deceive them. However, Women muſt not fancy that they can eaſily deceive 'em; for Men being perſwaded that it is their Intereſt to maintain the Right which Opinion gives 'em, and Women out of a mutual jealouſy, betraying one another upon that point; there

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is no need at all to conſult a Certificate out of a Church-Book, to know their Age; their precautions are not proof againſt the Inquiries which every Body makes into it. They, who are the leaſt concerned in it, delight in ſuch a Curioſity; and the more Women ſeem to affect to conceal their Age, the more Men are deſirous to diſcover it: Nay, they will often make ſome conſiderable additions to it, the better to prove, as it ſeems, that they blame 'em juſtly for ſubſtracting out of it. It were therefore better for Women to be moderate in that point; they need only take care not to have any Paſſion, that does not become their Age.

MAXIM III.

When Women are immodeſt in their Words, they give occaſion to believe, that they are immodeſt in their Lives.

REFLECTION.

WHen Women are free in their words, they are thought to be free in their actions: At leaſt, Men are ſo perſwaded of it, that they are bolder with them, than with thoſe who are more modeſt in their Diſcourſes: The modeſty of the latter reſtrains the boldeſt Men; but becauſe the too great freedom of the former, ſeems to

give the liberty to make ſome attempts upon them, Men will do it ſo much the more boldly, becauſe they fancy that they cannot fail of a good ſucceſs. And laſtly, the ſame liberty, which incourages Men to apply themſelves to thoſe Women, will ſoon give 'em a diſguſt for them. Tho' Women be never ſo Beautiful, if they are not Modeſt, they'll pleaſe only ſome Men, but they will never be conſtantly loved by any Body: For a Man will not love long what he does not eſteem; and nothing is perfectly loved, but what is thought to be perfect; which is the privilege of Virtue. If a Woman is not virtuous, her modeſty will make one believe that ſhe is; which is the privilege of Modeſty. Baſhfulneſs and Modeſty are the ſureſt Guards of a Woman's Honeſty; and therefore when Women are immodeſt, one will be apt to believe that they are not honeſt: As a Man is not brave enough, if he has only the courage of a Woman; ſo a Woman is not chaſte enough, if ſhe has only the chaſtity of a Man. The leaſt Faults in this caſe are conſiderable Crimes; The moſt diſcreet and modeſt Manners are the moſt powerful Charms, which they can make uſe of, to be conſtantly loved by Men. *Montagne* was of the ſame Opinion; and that Opinion is general enough. "Wo-"men, ſays he, (l. 2.) will find, if they "mind it, that if they are Modeſt, they "will be not only very much eſteem'd for

"it

"it, but alſo more beloved. A Man never "leaves his Game for a denial, if it pro- "ceeds from Chaſtity, and not from Choice. "Tho' we ſwear, threaten and complain "never ſo much, we Lye, we love 'em the "better for it. There is no ſuch allure- "ment as Modeſty. Seeing Women deſire by all means to be loved by Men, let 'em be diſcreet and modeſt, if they deſire to be loved conſtantly. Whatever they may do, they will never be conſtantly loved, but according as they prove conſtantly mo- deſt.

XXV. *The Language of Love.*

MAXIM I.

When a Woman does often hear a Man ſay, that he Loves her, ſhe will Love him at laſt.

REFLECTION.

WOmen deſire to be loved, and there- fore they are very much diſpo- ſed to hear favourably thoſe, who tell 'em that they are in love with them; and after they have heard them ſay ſo for a

long time, they are ſo much the more willing to believe it, becauſe they wiſh for it. Laſtly, when they are well perſwaded that Men love 'em, 'tis a very difficult thing for them to forbear loving. Women are ſo well pleaſed when they are loved, that it makes 'em find ſome Amiableneſs in thoſe, who do often tell 'em that they love 'em; and ſeeing they believe that Men love 'em, becauſe they are lovely, are they not obliged in gratitude to love in their turn thoſe, who love 'em and appear to them lovely? But, laying aſide gratitude, (for it is of no great power in this matter) let us ſay that the ſenſibility of both Sexes for one another, and the moſt natural relation that is to be found between them, do extremely diſpoſe them to a mutual love, let the Reaſon, which moves them to it, be never ſo little; and therefore 'tis in vain for Men to rely upon their ſtrength, in order to reſiſt ſome attacks, which are commonly made with great Art, and which they are ſo naturally diſpoſed to yield to.

MAXIM II.

Tho' the Love we expreſs for others, ſeems to be never ſo much unintereſted, yet it has always ſome relation to Self-love.

REFLECTION.

NOtwithſtanding the many proteſtations of a love altogether unintereſted, don't believe it eaſily, before you have made a Trial of many years, whereby you may be convinced, that nothing elſe but your own Intereſt has excited your Love; and in order to ſucceed in your Tryal, take off all hopes of obtaining any thing of you: But, if you obſerve it well, you will always perceive that a Man hopes, and conſequently, that he is Intereſted. We muſt not therefore expect any conſtant Love: We have always an Eye to our ſelves in all our Paſſions; and ſo we ceaſe inſenſibly to love, when Self-love ceaſes inſenſibly to be ſatisfied: Which is a common thing; becauſe we grow commonly weary of what we have enjoyed a long time. A Man will at firſt expreſs an unintereſted and reaſonable love for you, to juſtify your Ingagement; keep up therefore his good opinion of you, by not permitting him to continue to love you, but as he begun: Seeing he has only ſhew'd a reaſonable love for you, in order to get yours; 'tis a ſign that he had

a mind to perſwade you, that you ought not to ſuffer any Body to love you, but out of reaſon.

MAXIM III.

As we don't appear always lovely, ſo we muſt not expect to be always loved.

REFLECTION.

WE appear lovely, becauſe we bring along with us the charms of Novelty; becauſe we take care to hide our faults; becauſe we are reſpectful, complaiſant and aſſiduous; becauſe we excite ſome deſires, and keep up ſome hopes; becauſe we ſhew our ſelves on the faireſt ſide: Laſtly, becauſe we endeavour to be loved by others. But when we are come to that point, that we have obtained the deſired love, and enjoyed it for ſome time; the conſtraint we have been under, grows tireſome, and we get out of it, to ſhew our ſelves ſuch as we are: Our Eyes, which Love does commonly ſhut up, are opened by the indifferency, which Uſe ſeldom fails to produce; ſo that Lovers perceiving one another's faults, have no longer any regard for one another: And ſo every one thinks, he may very well diſpenſe with the reſpect, complaiſance, and aſſiduity he uſed before, as a Duty which his riſing Paſſion ſeem'd to re-

require. And whilſt they have no more any regard for one another, others come in, and take their places ſo much the more eaſily, becauſe they are very well contented to leave 'em. Let no Body therefore complain much in ſuch a caſe: Inconſtancy is always more or leſs reciprocal; that is, ſome will change ſooner, others later; but they will all change, becauſe there is not any one Perſon perfect. (*St. Evremond.*)

"Seeing it has pleaſed God, that we ſhou'd "not be perfect enough, to be always "lovely; why do we pretend to be always "loved? There is no reaſon to upbraid any "Body with his Inconſtancy in love, as if "it were a very great evil; it is no more "in the power of ſome Perſons to love or "not to love, than to be well or to be ſick. "All that can be reaſonably expected from "Inconſtant Perſons, is ingenuouſly to own "their levity, and not to add Treaſon to "Inconſtancy. One may be innocent with the latter, but the former is always an ill thing. One muſt not therefore expect to be always loved, whatever proteſtations one may hear of a conſtant and perpetual love. That love will be like the Moon; it will decreaſe when it can no more increaſe. "† Believe me, ſays *Propertius*, no Body is faithful in love; I know it by experience.

† *Expertus dico, nemo eſt in amore fidelis.* l. 2. Eleg. 25.

You

You therefore, who pretend to ſo much Wiſdom, Penetration and Prudence, can you rely, as upon a very ſolid thing, upon the love of ſuch a Perſon ; I will not ſay, who perhaps laughs at your weakneſs, and loves you only out of Intereſt ; but, who, if ſhe has a ſincere affection for you, will at laſt change it into indifferency, becauſe ſhe will be weary of it ; or becauſe the ſight of a new Object, attended with the Charms of Novelty, will ſoon pleaſe her, and deprive you of a love which you bought at the expence of ſo much trouble, weakneſs, and baſeneſs? Every Body muſt therefore, for his own happineſs, look upon Love in the point of Sight, which terminates it, I mean, in its change : And then, he'll begin to love without eagerneſs, he'll continue to love without uneaſineſs, and he'll ceaſe to be loved without grief.

MAXIM IV.

An angry Lover is extremely deſirous to allay his Anger.

REFLECTION.

WHen Lovers expreſs ſome ſpite and anger by Words, they wou'd be glad to be told, that they have no reaſon to fall into a Paſſion and to vex themſelves ; they

they accuſe thoſe, whom they love, only to oblige them to juſtify themſelves; and they blame them, only to have an occaſion to acquit 'em. The more they ſeem to be willing to find them guilty, the more they deſire that they ſhou'd ſhew their innocency. At the very ſame time that thoſe angry Lovers are ready to fall out, they wou'd be already reconciled: Their Hearts are more favourable to thoſe, who are the Objects of their Anger, than to themſelves: They make ſome Imprecations, but they wou'd be extremely vexed, if their words were attended with the effects. The Heart of an Amorous Accuſer will afford him better Reaſons to juſtify the Perſon whom he accuſes, than the Perſon accuſed can find to juſtify her ſelf. The former will ſoon be appeaſed, if the latter appears willing to appeaſe him. Spite will not therefore cure a Man of that Paſſion, (Love does not break, it rips,) on the contrary, it may ſtrengthen it, if the perſon, with whom he is angry, knows how to make a good uſe of it. *Terence* expreſſes himſelf admirably well upon this Subject; eſpecially in the firſt Act of his *Eunuch*, when a Slave ſeeing his Maſter, (who being angry with his Miſtreſs, was reſolved to ſee her no more,) ſpeaks to him in this manner. "Indeed, Sir, "if you can ſo far prevail upon your "ſelf, it is the moſt Advantageous and "the moſt Glorious thing you can do:

„ But

"But if you begin once, and have not cou-
"rage enough to go on; if out of an a-
"morous impatience, you return thither,
"when no Body deſires it, and before you
"are reconciled; ſhewing thereby that you
"love her ſo much, that you can't be with-
"out her, you are a Man undone, ſhe'll
"laugh at you aſſoon as ſhe ſees you are
"overcome. Laſtly, before it be too late,
"conſider again and again, what you are
"to do; for you muſt not fancy that a
"thing, which has neither Reaſon nor Mea-
"ſure in it ſelf can be directed by Reaſon
"and Meaſure. You muſt know, Sir,
"that Lovers are neceſſarily expoſed to all
"theſe inconveniencies, to repulſes, ſuſ-
"picions and quarrels: To Day there is a
"Truce, to morrow there will be a War,
"and at laſt a new Peace will be made.
"If you pretend that Reaſon can fix things,
"that are altogether inconſtant and uncer-
"tain; 'tis juſt as if you wou'd reconcile
"Folly and Reaſon: For, as to what you
"ſay within your ſelf, now that you are
"angry; I! To go and ſee her! She, who
"prefers my Rival to me! Who deſpiſes
"me! Who wou'd not receive me yeſter-
"day! Let me do; I had rather die;
"I'll make her know who I am: All that
"great Fire will be extinguiſhed in a mo-
"ment with the ſmalleſt Tear that ſhall
"come out of her Eyes with much ado,
"and when ſhe has rubbed them very hard;
"you'll be ready to blame your ſelf, and

"to

" to give her ſuch a ſatisfaction as ſhe de-
" ſires. The beſt advice that can be given to thoſe, who are altogether reſolved to love no more, is to ſhun the objects of their Love. The ſenſes being no more ſtruck with the Object; the impreſſion it made, will more eaſily wear away: Whereas the more it is preſent, the more it makes deep and laſting impreſſions. (*a*) As it removes from the Eyes, it removes likewiſe from the Mind, and conſequently can make no long ſtay in the Heart.

XXVI. *The Complaining Man.*

MAXIM I.

We are at laſt unwilling to pity thoſe, who are always complaining.

REFLECTION.

IT is true, that when a Man complains he has a mind to eaſe his grief, and that he does really find ſome comfort by complaining: For as we are never more affected with Joy, than when we have the Pleaſure to expreſs it to others; ſo nothing will

(a) *Quantum oculis, animo tam procul ibit amor.* Propert. l. 3. Eleg. 20.

allay

allay our Grief ſo much, as the liberty of complaining. Nevertheleſs we ought to be moderate in our Complaints; we muſt not be always upon the doleful tone; we muſt not be troubleſome to our Friends, by ſpeaking too much of our incommodities. Self-love makes us extremely ſenſible to our afflictions: But we muſt not expect the ſame ſenſibility from others, ſeeing 'tis alſo the Intereſt of their Self-love not to ſuffer themſelves to be ſurprized by ſuch a Senſibility. You may, if you pleaſe, pour your Heart into the Boſoms of your Friends, by a moderate account of your ſufferings; but don't overflow them with a Torrent of Complaints, if you will not tire their patience, and make your ſelf as troubleſome to them, as you are afflicted: If you make your Caſe always woful, no Body will pity you at laſt: They'll think that you are more touchy than unhappy, and more impatient than worthy of compaſſion. "(*Mont. L.* 3) "He, who complains without reaſon, will "not be pitied, when there is a reaſon for "it: He, who is always complaining, will "never be pitied, I leave off every Day "that childiſh and unreaſonable humour, "which makes us deſirous to move the "compaſſion of our Friends: We make our "afflictions greater then they are, to excite "their Tears: We praiſe thoſe, who ſhew "a great firmneſs in adverſity; but we "blame our Friends, when they are not "moved with our misfortune.

"*St.*

(*St. Evremond.*) "It is a ridiculous thing to "complain of one's miſeries in an eloquent "manner; he, who gives himſelf the trou- "ble to diſcourſe of 'em, ſaves me the "trouble of comforting him. (*Mont. l.* 3.) "When I am ſick, I repreſent my ſickneſs "ſuch as it is, and I avoid ominous Words "and affected Exclamations. They, who "viſit a Wiſe Man during his ſickneſs, "muſt have, if not a merry, at leaſt a ſe- "date countenance. I am ſo far from lov- ing to complain, that I don't love to ſpeak of my misfortune, nor do I care that any Body ſhou'd ſpeak to me of it: Thoſe mu- tual diſcourſes do but fix the Imagination upon grievous objects. I am very willing to hear the complaints of unhappy Men; but I am not at all inclin'd to complain be- fore others: becauſe I don't think my ſelf to be ſo conſiderable a Man, as to deſerve that any Body ſhou'd vouchſafe to ſhare in my grief.

MAXIM II.

The Complaints of Men do not ſo much proceed from their great ſufferings, as from too great a niceneſs.

REFLECTION.

THE moſt happy Men are the moſt ſenſible, the leaſt thing will make 'em uneaſy and diſcontented. They are

certainly to be pitied, when we conſider that they are full of Sorrows, in the very boſom of what they call Felicity. *(Charron.)*

"It is a ſign of weakneſs, to ſubject ones ſelf "to a particular way of living; it is a cow- "ardly ſoftneſs, and a delicateneſs unwor- "thy of an honeſt Man, which makes us "troubleſome and unacceptable in Conver- "ſation, and too tender and ſoft. A grain of Sand, a little too big, hurts the foot of a Man, who ſeldom goes out of his Houſe, or who goes always in a Coach. A little Wind will bring a Rheumatiſm upon *N.* who has no other buſineſs than to think continually of his Riches and Conveniencies: A ſmall Fluxion, which wou'd not diſquiet *M.* in the leaſt, as being uſed to work and fatigue, alarms and vexes *O.* whom a ſoft Idleneſs renders extremely ſenſible to the ſmalleſt pain. I learn from thence, that there is nothing more contrary to the ſweetneſs of Life, than to love it too much. The more a Man indulges himſelf in a ſoft life, the more the leaſt ſufferings will appear to him grievous and intolerable. He'll be always alarm'd and uneaſy, becauſe he knows that the Cauſes of ſmall Pains are very frequent. Ever ſince I don't value a ſmall Pain, I live a very quiet Life.

XXVII. *The Comforter.*

MAXIM I.

He, who thinks more of ſpeaking fine Words, than of giving good Reaſons, is a wretched Comforter.

REFLECTION.

THis happens very often; becauſe Men, to ſatisfy their Vanity, are more deſirous to ſhew that they ſpeak well, than to allay the grief of thoſe, whom they undertake to comfort. It is not always by the choice of our Words, nor even by the weight of our Reaſons, that we can eaſe afflicted Perſons; the effect of our conſolation does commonly depend upon the manner of doing it. We muſt ſeem at firſt to be of their opinion; by that means, we diſpoſe 'em to hear us more patiently, when we go about to oppoſe it. "*(Mont. L. 3.)* "We muſt comply with them in the begin- "ning, and ſeem to approve and excuſe their "complaints; and then we may eaſily and "inſenſibly go farther, and uſe ſuch ar- "guments as are proper to cure 'em. Win 'em therefore by your complaiſance, that you may the better inſinuate your Reaſons to them. "*(Ibid.)* He, who goes about to "comfort a Man, will never ſucceed in it,

"if he oppoſes his paſſion: Such an Oppo-
"ſition offends him, and increaſes his grief:
"Contention will exaſperate him. I find
"that if any Body in common diſcourſe
"conteſts with me about a thing, which I
"have ſaid careleſsly, I take offence at it, and
"maintain it more eagerly, than I would do
"a thing wherein I ſhould be concerned.
But above all things, don't inſiſt much upon the ſubject of a Man's affliction: Remove inſenſibly the Idea of the afflicting Object. "(*Mont. L.* 3.) Make a Diverſion
"turn gently your Diſcourſe another way,
"and make it fall by degrees upon a ſubject
"that has ſome relation to it, and then up-
"on a more remote one, ſo as to make the
"afflicting thought vaniſh away imperce-
"ptibly. But it falls out unluckily for afflicted People, that Uſe has introduced a quite contrary Conduct, by ſo many Compliments of Condolence, by mourning Cloaths, and a World of ſad and Melancholy Objects.

MAXIM. II.

He, who knows not how to comfort himſelf, will not be able to comfort others.

REFLECTION.

HE, who deſires to have the neceſſary qualifications to comfort himſelf, ought to know how to prepare himſelf for all

all the Events, which may afflict him; he ought to know their weakneſs, and his own ſtrength, when they do actually afflict him; he ought to perſwade himſelf, that the more impatiently he will bear them, the more he will be ſenſible to them: Thus having got the Science of comforting himſelf, he will be able to comfort others.

I ſhall ſet down the inſtructions, which I have followed, or which I wou'd follow, if there was an occaſion for it. I deſire my Readers to receive them only as ſome Reflections; for I don't preſume that they are infallible Rules, to lead a Man to the tranquillity he looks for. I am perſwaded that many others may think better than I upon this Subject. If any one fancies that it is not always ſafe to imitate my Example, I ſhall perhaps move him to give me a better one, which I ſhall willingly follow: For it matters not from whence Tranquillity proceeds, provided we may obtain it.

REFLECTIONS.

To comfort ones ſelf in Adverſity.

1. ALL ſorts of misfortunes may happen to me; I ought therefore to prepare my ſelf for them, and think it an advantage, when any one of 'em does not happen to me.

2. I have loſt a Cauſe; I knew very well

that I might loſe it, tho' my Conduct was never ſo juſt; and I expected ſuch a poſſibility. I hear that one of my beſt Friends is dead; I am moved with his death; but I am not too much afflicted, becauſe I knew that he was as Mortal a Man as I am. I have been horribly calumniated; but I am not ſurprized at it; don't I know that the moſt unſpotted Innocence cannot be ſecure from the malignity of Wicked Men? I have been deprived of a pleaſant and honourable Employment; I never look'd upon that Employment as my own, ſo as to believe that I cou'd not be deprived of it; but as a Loan, which I wou'd willingly reſtore, whenever it ſhou'd be demanded of me. I was a very rich Man, I had a vaſt Income, I got prodigiouſly by Trading, I owed nothing, but others were very much indebted to me: all thoſe things are vaniſhed away, and I am not amazed at it; for I knew by experience that a Bankrupt, a Theft, a meer want of Attention, or Exactneſs, or an unforeſeen Accident wou'd be able to make me poor, and to render me more indebted to others, than they were to me. I had ſome Friends, who gave me continual marks of their affection; they ſeem'd to intereſt themſelves in every thing wherein I was concern'd; they expreſt to me their Love and Tenderneſs upon all occaſions: But they have all diſappeared; a Revolution in my Fortune, made 'em all run away from me; I ſuſpected before, that Adverſity wou'd

wou'd render me as odious to them, as they ſeem'd to love me in my Proſperity. I was protected by a patron of great Credit; he cou'd obtain any thing of the Miniſters; they never refus'd him anything that he askt, and he was always ready to ask in my favour every thing that I required of him: That time is no more, the Wheel of Fortune made him go down ſo low, that he wants a Protector himſelf: I ſhou'd have been amazed at ſuch a Revolution, if I had not conſidered, that a more powerful Concurrent than he, might ſoon overthrow his Fortune together with mine. I had a glorious reputation in the World; every Body ſpoke honourably of me every where; I was look'd upon as a Man very much diſtinguiſhed from others, upon the account of my Talents: But contempt has ſucceeded thoſe applauſes: I ſuſpected that ſuch a change might very well happen; for, as Intereſt and Complaiſance are commonly the cauſes of the Praiſes that are beſtowed upon Men; ſo a ſmall Fault which they ſhall commit, a little defect which ſhall be obſerved in their Conduct, an unlucky ſucceſs in one of their enterprizes, or one of thoſe caprices, which whole Nations are frequently ſubject to, will bring down thoſe Men as low by the contempt which others expreſs for them, as they have been elevated by their applauſes. Thus, relying upon nothing, I ſhall not be afflicted with a-

ny thing, ſo as to loſe the tranquillity of my Mind.

3. I excite my ſelf to bear patiently all ſorts of misfortunes, before they happen: I uſe my ſelf to them, before they come; and with the help of Meditation, I acquire that Patience, which others never think of acquiring before hand.

4. It is very difficult for me, not to be moved with any unexpected thing; and therefore I endeavour to foreſee every thing, and to repreſent to my Mind, not only what does commonly happen, but alſo whatever may happen.

5. When I am abroad, I fancy that all ſorts of diſaſters have happen'd in my Houſe, and ſo when I come home, I think my ſelf happy, for not finding any diſorder in it, which I might have found.

6. At the very ſame time that I reſolve to be a conſtant obſerver of Virtue, I am perſuaded that I ſhall be continually obliged to ſtruggle with Fortune.

7. Tho' I think my ſelf never ſo ſafe, yet I am always prepared for any Surprize; amidſt the Careſſes of Fortune, I expect to be aſſaulted by her.

8. I have obſerved that there is not any one Man in the World, who enjoys all the good things thereof, or who enjoys them as long as he lives: we ſee ſome, who enjoy Riches; but they are humbled by their Birth. Others have an undiſputable Nobility, but they want what is neceſſary to keep

keep it up. One Man is equally Noble and Rich, but he is obliged to live a private and retired Life, becauſe no Body loves him. Another gets a vaſt Eſtate by a happy Marriage; but he muſt leave it to ſome Strangers, becauſe he can get no Children. Another has as many Children as he can wiſh for; but their diſorderly Life makes him uneaſy, and afflicts him. Laſtly, whatever condition we may be in, there is always ſomething, which we deſire or fear.

9. I am not diſcouraged in Adverſity, nor proud in Proſperity; becauſe I take care to prepare my ſelf againſt all Events: Such a preparation makes me modeſt, when I am happy, and patient, when I am unhappy.

10. If I enjoy that pretended Felicity, which ariſes from the good Things of Fortune; either I know that my condition is ſubject to change, or I don't know it: if I don't know it, how can I flatter my ſelf to be happy with ſuch an Ignorance, which diſabling me from foreſeeing the afflicting Revolutions that may happen to me, will make me more ſenſible to them? If I know the Inconſtancy of Fortune, it will be very difficult for me not to be afraid to loſe what I know can be taken from me: How can a perfect happineſs be conſiſtent with a continual fear? If I am not much troubled with ſuch a Loſs, 'tis a ſign that the advantage it deprives me of, can afford me no great ſatisfaction. I conclude from what has

has been ſaid, that I ought to look upon all the good things of this World, with a prudent Indifferency, leſt the Tranquillity of my Mind ſhou'd depend upon them.

11. If Fortune leaves me, ſhe will but prevent me; for it is certain that I muſt leave her ſome time or other: What ſignifies it whether I leave her when I die, or whether ſhe forſakes me now?

12. We don't know our ſtrength, if we never make a trial of it. A Felicity, which has never been attacked, cannot bear the leaſt aſſault: But when it has, as it were, ſtruggled with inconveniences and misfortunes, it hardens amongſt injuries, it yields to no diſaſters, and if it falls at any time, it will fight upon its Knees. (*a*) That part of the Body, which is moſt exerciſed, is commonly the ſtrongeſt. The ſtrongeſt Trees are thoſe, which are moſt ſhaken by the Winds. (*a*) *Senec. de provid. cap.* 2.

13. A Wiſe Man feels a misfortune, but he overcomes it, and raiſes himſelf as it were in a Throne of Tranquillity and Peace, above all the miſeries wherewith he is aſſaulted and threatened: Every Adverſity is an Exerciſe for him.

14. Adverſity brings me back again into the right way, and enables me to return to God: It removes Flatterers from me, that I may know his Truth; and affords me wherewith to appeaſe his Juſtice, by offering to him the ſacrifice of my Body and Soul.

15. It

15. It is with Virtue as with the beſt Perfumes, which never ſmell ſo well, as when they are bruiſed and thrown into the Fire. How good an odour has a Man for me, when he triumphs over Adverſity!

16. The Virtue of ſome Men is ſo weak, that it wants to be kept up by ſome diſgraces; ſome humble Men wou'd be undone, if they were not humbled; ſome regular Men wou'd leave the right way, if God was not pleaſed to keep 'em within their bounds, as it were, by a Hedge of Thorns; ſome compaſſionate Men wou'd harden themſelves, if they were not ſoftened by the ſenſe of ſome Miſeries; the Devotion of ſome Men, wou'd be extinguiſhed, if it was not kindled again with the fire of ſome Trials.

17. The degree of my Fortune is not very high; but there are a world of Men below me ſtill. If Opinion makes me think that Princes are happy Men, becauſe ſtately and magnificent Palaces are built for them; Reaſon hinders me from believing that I am an unhappy Man, when I ſee thoſe poor Work-men, who earn their Bread with much ſweating, by building thoſe very ſame Palaces, and who looking upon me, think that I am as happy as thoſe Princes appear to me to be. It is true, that I am not a Chancellour, nor a Preſident, nor a Secretary of State, nor a Comptroller General, nor a Miniſter, nor a Duke; but it is true alſo, that I am not a Plough-

Plough-man, nor a Vine-dreſſer, nor a Porter, nor a Chair-man. Thoſe unhappy Men have ſome Intervals of Contentment: Have I leſs Reaſon than they have to be contented? Few Men make ſuch a Reflection, and yet it is as uſeful, as it is eaſy to make it. There are many, who will always look upon thoſe, who are above them, but never upon thoſe who are below them. One Man, who goes before them, vexes 'em more, than an infinite number of others, whom they precede, will pleaſe them: And therefore few Men are happy, becauſe moſt of 'em are preceded by ſome Body.

18. *Seneca.* It is a Spectacle worthy of God, to ſee a Man who is ſo bold, as to march againſt Fortune, and ſo courageous, as to challenge her. What Heroiſm, to have the ſecurity of a God with the weakneſs of a Man! Great Examples are particularly to be ſeen in the changes of Fortune. A truly courageous Man, is no more troubled and aſtoniſhed, when he is choſen to try his ſtrength againſt Adverſity, than a brave Soldier, when he hears the Noiſe of the Trumpets, which call him to a Battel. If he falls, his Greatneſs will not ſuffer by it; Men will have the ſame Veneration for him, as for demoliſhed Temples, the very ruins whereof are reverenced and adored by Religious Perſons.

19. The Soul of a Man is never better known than in Adverſity; one may ſee then

then his firmneſs or his weakneſs. Adverſity lays open his true Sentiments, tho' they be never ſo deep: The diſguiſed Man diſappears in the midſt of Sufferings, and naked Truth remains. I never knew ſo well the force of my Mind, as when Grief and Sorrow undertook to move and caſt it down; the reſiſtance it makes on ſuch violent occaſions, renders it more valuable to me, than all the peaceable Tranquillity which it does enjoy in the boſom of Softneſs, and amongſt the Sweets of Proſperity.

20. What is it that ſhews the skill of a Pilot? A Storm: What is it that ſhews the ſtrength of a Wreſtler? The Wreſtling Place: What is it that ſhews the bravery of a Captain? A Battel: What is it that ſhews a Courageous Soul? Adverſity. In effect, if I had never been in Adverſity, I ſhou'd not have known my ſelf ſo well as I do. When I came to know my weakneſs, I went about to ſtrengthen it; when I came to know my ſtrength, I took care to exerciſe it, that it might not decay.

21. I don't ſuffer much by the changes of Fortune; becauſe I never took much delight in her Favours: No Man was ever caſt down with her Injuries, but he ſuffered himſelf before to be deceived by her Favours and Careſſes. That I may not fear the Treaſons of Fortune, I deſpiſe her Flatteries; that I may not be ſeduced by her

her Flatteries, I expect to be betrayed by her.

22. As I don't pretend to be ſo well qualified, as to deſerve the Favours of Fortune; ſo no body hears me complain of her unkindneſs to me.

23. It is not enough for me to bear patiently the Evils of Adverſity, I endeavour to go farther; I uſe my efforts to turn them into good things. I have made a Loſs; I ſhall ſpend in the ſtudy of Wiſdom, the time which I ſpent in what I loſt. I have not been able to obtain what I demanded; I ſhall endeavour to make my ſelf more worthy of it. Am I tormented with a Sickneſs? It will give me ſuch a diſguſt for Life, that I ſhall not be troubled with the fear of Death.

24. When I am reconciled to my pains, they are leſs grievous to me, than when I bear 'em impatiently: I cannot avoid that pain, I will therefore ſuffer it: If I grew impatient, I ſhou'd ſide with my pain againſt my ſelf, to torment me more. Why ſhou'd I not uſe my ſelf to every thing, as is happens; ſeeing I cannot hinder it? I will not have my happineſs depend upon ſuch things, as are not in my Power. That Maxim is of very great uſe.

25. The more I think upon any afflicting pain, the more I make it inſupportable to me, if I don't find my ſelf ſtrong enough to bear it; it is therefore better for me not to fix my Eyes upon it, if it be poſſible.

26. To

26. To ſee many other Men in the ſame Adverſity wherein I am, can be no comfort to me; I mean, that I don't bear them ſuch an ill will, as to be more eaſy in my ſufferings, only becauſe I ſee them ſuffer.

27. Evils may indeed afflict me, but they will never force me to cry Quarter.

28. I love to hear that Philoſopher, who being inſulted by Fortune, who had taken away from him all that he had, laught at her, and ſtretching out a Rope to her, told her: "Go, Fortune, and hang thy "ſelf, out of Grief, for having not been "able to diſquiet my Mind and to ſhake "my Virtue,

29. I don't deſire any Evil; for I ſhou'd preſume too much upon my ſtrength: But I deſire only Virtue, which enables us to ſuffer them patiently.

30. I ſhall never think that Proſperity is a true and real advantage, as long as I ſee that it is to be found amongſt the wicked, and that they are not better Men for it. "Virtue is aſleep in a calm; the vigour of "the Mind grows ſlack in Tranquillity: "Being contented with Happineſs, we "don't mind Wiſdom; being fill'd with "the Temporal Goods we enjoy, we for-"get the eternal ones which we hope for; "and becauſe we have all that we deſire, "we don't deſire what is moſt neceſſary to "us.

31. I ſhou'd never truſt Fortune, tho' in order to be reconciled to me, ſhe beſtow-

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ed plentifully Honours, Riches and Glory upon me: I wou'd always put all thoſe things in a place, where ſhe might take 'em away again, without cauſing any Grief to me. "Fortune, who is pleaſed with Cru-
"elty, and always conſtant in her Inſo-
"lence, does not permit that the Riches
"and Honours, which are in her power,
"ſhou'd remain long in one place; ſhe re-
"moves them very often, and to day ſhe
"beſtows upon me what ſhe will perhaps
"beſtow upon another to morrow: If ſhe
"will ſtay with me, I am well contented
"with it; but if ſhe claps her Wings in
"order to retire, I ſhall willingly give her
"back again all that ſhe lent me; I ſhall
"wrap up my ſelf in my own Virtue, being
"contented with an honeſt poverty. *Horat. l. 3. Od. 29.*

32. It is not in my power to diſpoſe of Fortune; but it is in my power to make a good uſe of what ſhe gives me, and to ſlight what ſhe does not give me. It is not in my power to be in Proſperity, or to get out of Adverſity; but it is in my power to enjoy Proſperity without Pride and Haughtineſs, and to bear Adverſity without trouble and impatience.

33. If I ask ſome Favours of Fortune, perhaps I ſhall not obtain them; but I can very eaſily forbear asking them.

34. Fortune may take away from me, againſt my will, all that I have, afflict me with

with a Sickneſs, expoſe me to Evil-ſpeaking, and to ſome other misfortunes; but ſhe cannot make me Proud, Envious, Revengeful, Hypocrite, Coward, Deceitful, and Covetous againſt my Will. She may deprive me of ſome Pleaſures; but ſhe cannot make me uneaſy: I will not have my Happineſs and Tranquillity to depend upon her Caprices.

REFLECTIONS,

To keep one's ſelf from Melancholy.

1. IF I was Melancholy, the ſmalleſt pain I feel wou'd become great. Sadneſs makes the moſt indifferent things inſupportable, the Mirth of others afflicting, and their Virtue nauſeous. It is a ridiculous thing to dreſs Wiſdom and Virtue with Sadneſs and ill Humour; yet, it is a very common thing, and it ſeems, very Faſhionable. I ſee often ſome of our pretended Wiſe Men, who fancy they ſhou'd derogate from their Wiſdom, if they appeared merry. (*Mont. l.* 1. *c.* 1.) "I neither love nor eſteem ſadneſs, it is a fooliſh "and ugly Ornament. The *Italians* "have rightly called Malignity by that "Name; for it is a hurtful, fooliſh, cowardly and baſe quality: The Stoicks will "not allow of it in their Wiſe Man.

2. If I could not forbear being caſt down with Sorrow, I wou'd take care at leaſt to conceal it, when I am in company, leſt I ſhou'd ſpoil the pleaſure of it. I always endeavour to appear well pleaſed with others, and my ſelf, and I am in effect, as much as I can, ſuch as I appear to be.

3. A little thing will rejoyce me, becauſe I am willing to rejoyce at a little thing: I willingly rejoyce at any little thing that gives me occaſion for it, and I am not troubled with every little thing, that gives me occaſion to be melancholy; becauſe either of them do frequently happen.

4. When I practice any Virtue, that is attended with Gravity and Auſterity, I put on a chearful and ſerene Countenance, to make it more acceptable. But if it be true, that Gaiety is very pleaſant, it is no leſs true that it does a Man no honour, unleſs it be ſuited to the perſon, the time, and place, and other objects of *Decorum*: It muſt be ſeaſoned with Prudence, and ſupported by Wiſdom. When I mix Gaiety with Gravity, I keep the one from turning into Sadneſs, and the other into a fooliſh and ridiculous Mirth. There is nothing ſo like Melancholy as too great a Gravity; and there is nothing ſo like Extravagance, as too great a Gaiety. If any good thing happens to me; tho' it be true that Joy is very talkative, yet I don't ſpeak of it before unhappy Men, becauſe I might encreaſe their trouble and their Sorrows, if they

they compared their Miſery with my Proſperity.

Read again what I have ſaid concerning Adverſity, that you may not be overwhelmed with Melancholy.

REFLECTIONS.

To keep one's ſelf from being vexed at the contempt, injurious words, and evil-ſpeaking of other Men.

1. WHat! Shall I give every Body the power to make me uneaſy, whenever they pleaſe?

2. I will not anſwer the contempt and injurious words of other Men any other way, than by obſerving my Conduct, to make it worthy of praiſe and eſteem: And by that means, the contempt which others expreſs for me, will return upon them. The Wiſdom of thoſe, who are perſecuted, renders their Perſecutors a great deal more odious than they wou'd be.

3. What is the publick eſteem, which may be refuſed to me, but the opinion of many Men in general, who are not much valued in particular? In effect, how many Men are there, who do not eſteem what deſerves to be ſo, but only what they hear others eſteem! How many Men, who approve what they do not know to be worthy of approbation!

4. The eſteem of Men is ſo inconſtant, that I cannot apprehend how any one ſhou'd give himſelf ſo much trouble to obtain it. He, who approves us on a particular occaſion, will be no leſs diſpoſed to depreſs us upon another occaſion. (*Eſſais de Morale.*) That very eſteem will often be the cauſe of it, becauſe it rather excites jealouſy than affection. Whoever thinks that the approbation of other Men is the Reward of Virtuous Actions, builds upon an uncertain and tottering Foundation. *Mont. l.* 3.

5. The moſt perfect and the beſt grounded eſteem, does not contribute in the leaſt to our perfection. That eſteem is only the regard Men have for us, which ſuppoſes that there are ſome good things in us, but it does not beſtow them upon us; for it adds nothing to us, it leaves us ſuch as we are, and ſo it is of no uſe to us. That regard ſubſiſts no longer than Men apply themſelves to us, and that application is rare and of no long continuance.

6. Tho' eſteem flatters very much the vanity of Men, yet I had rather get their Love. Eſteem will only admit me into their Minds, but Love will open their Hearts to me. If they eſteem me, they may be animated with jealouſy againſt me; but if they love me, they will have none of thoſe malignant paſſions, which do commonly trouble our repoſe.

7. There

7. There is ſcarce any one Man, who eſteems me leſs than I eſteem my ſelf; and becauſe I don't value my ſelf, I am not angry with thoſe, who don't ſeem to value me: I only take care to acquire that which ſhou'd move them to eſteem me.

8. I ſtand too much in need of perfection, to think of Glory: The main thing is to make my ſelf a better Man than I am. The ſhorteſt way to deſerve Glory, is to do for Conſcience what we do for Glory.

9. Let us ſee what that Glory is, which Men ſeek ſo eagerly, and which they loſe with ſo much grief. (*Eſſais de Morale.*) Humane Glory conſiſts altogether in the advantageous Judgment which others make of us: But they are commonly Men, to whom we are not well known, who have no great love for us, and their Judgment is neither very ſolid, nor very much to be eſteemed; ſo that we do often deſpiſe 'em in any other thing. Beſides, the Judgment they make of us is of no manner of uſe to us: It adds nothing to our Souls or Bodies: It leſſens none of our Miſeries; we are only deceived by it, becauſe we are induced thereby to judge of our ſelves, not according to truth, but according to the opinion of others: And after we have been amuſed with it during our Lives, it diſappears all of a ſudden when we come to die; becauſe we loſe then the Senſe of all thoſe things. Is there any thing more vain and more uſeleſs, and conſequently more un-

worthy of our deſires? " (*Mont.* l. 3.) " There is nothing more unreaſonable than " to ſeek Glory; for being needy and in- " digent within our ſelves, our Nature be- " ing imperfect, and wanting continually " mending, we ought to make it our chief " buſineſs: We muſt not fill our ſelves " with Wind and Voice; we want a more " ſolid ſubſtance to recruit our ſelves. It " were a very fooliſh thing for a hungry " Man to provide himſelf of a fine Gar- " ment, inſtead of a good Meal: We muſt " mind the moſt neceſſary things. Virtue, Probity and Wiſdom, are the moſt neceſſa- ry things, and the only ones that deſerve by themſelves to be praiſed and applauded. Our Glory conſiſts in the teſtimony of our Conſciences, I mean, when our Conſciences tell us that we do not depart from the Rules of Juſtice and Reaſon.

10. The eſteem which others expreſs for us, is often very Equivocal; becauſe their Thoughts are often contrary to their Words, and becauſe a meer motive of In- tereſt forces them to give us their appro- bation. Such a one looks graciouſly upon us, who will laugh at us behind our backs.

11. Nothing is truly valuable but what is Immortal. Glory is of no duration, I do not therefore value it much: I eſteem only Virtue, becauſe, tho' others don't eſteem it, yet it will be eternally valuable. " *Mont. l.* 2. It is impoſſible to find a good " and ſafe way in the windy confuſion of " Ru-

"Rumours, Reports, and vulgar Opinions,
"which drive us up and down. We muſt
"not aim at ſuch a floating and uncertain
"thing: Let us conſtantly follow Reaſon,
"and let the publick approbation follow us
"the ſame way, if it pleaſes.

12. Contempt being an imaginary Evil, it does not afflict me; but I have reaſon to be afflicted for my Faults, becauſe they are true and real Evils. Yet every Body is not of my mind: How many Men, who are more ſenſibly moved with the contempt which others expreſs for them, than they are ſorry for their contemptible qualities! So true it is, that the ſtrokes we give our ſelves, don't hurt us ſo much, as thoſe which we receive from others. What an Injuſtice! To be ſo imperfect, without being ſorry for't; and to be ſo much afflicted, when our great Imperfection comes to be known! Thus we are ſenſible to ſome imaginary Evils, whilſt we are often unconcerned for Faults, which are real Evils. "I have ſeen ſome Porters loaded with "two or three hundred Weight, who cou'd "not bear two or three hard Words. Which of thoſe two things, I beſeech you, ſhou'd have been the moſt troubleſome? We need only conſider which of 'em depends leſs upon imagination.

13. Ever ſince I agree with my ſelf, I find my ſelf very much diſpoſed to agree with others, tho' their contempt of me be never ſo great: An unquiet and reſtleſs

Mind, is often the cauſe of Diviſion. How ſhall we be able to endure other Men, if we cannot endure our ſelves?

14. The contempt of injurious Words, ſtifles Evil-ſpeaking, but reſentment revives it. I ſhould accknowledge the ſtrength of its Arms, if I confeſt that they have wounded me; I ſhou'd pleaſe my Enemy, if I intimated to him, that he can make me uneaſy.

15. I cou'd patiently hear a Frantick, or a Feveriſh and a Raving Man, tho' he abuſed me never ſo much; and why ſhou'd I not hear as patiently the ill Language and Calumnies of a Wicked Man?

16. I wiſh I could give ſuch an Extent to my Mind, that it might raiſe it ſelf above all the attempts of inſulting Men. I might find ſome tranquillity in that vaſt Extent: As a Stone thrown into the Sea raiſes no Storm in it; ſo an injurious Word will never cauſe any trouble or emotion in a great Soul.

17. He, who is not more unwilling to hear injurious Words than Praiſes, has made a great progreſs in the ſtudy of Wiſdom: The reaſon of it is, becauſe a Wiſe Man does not regulate his ſentiments by opinion: He is perſwaded that true Honour reſides in the Virtue of a Virtuous Man, and not in the opinion, which Men, ſubject to errour, inconſtancy and prejudices, may have of him.

18. If I was in poſſeſſion of one of thoſe Dignities, which raiſe Men very much above

bove others, I ſhou'd not deſire more honour and reſpect, than wou'd be neceſſary to keep up my Authority. Abating the Right of my Power, I ſhou'd very little care for that which goes by the name of Glory, with reſpect to that Power.

19. It were a diſhonour to me, to be honoured by ſome Men: How can Men of no Honour, do Honour to others?

20. "(*Mont. L.* 2.) I don't care ſo much "what I am in the opinion of other Men, "as what I am in my ſelf. How can I take delight in being eſteem'd, if I know that I deſerve to be deſpiſed? But on the contrary, when I am deſpiſed, it is a great comfort to me, if my Conſcience tells me that I am worthy of eſteem. "(*Mont. L.* 2.) It "ſeems to me, that for a Man to be known "to others is in a manner to have his Life "and Duration in their keeping. As for "me, I think that I am only in my ſelf: "And as for that other Life, which is in "the knowledge of my Friends; if I con-"ſider it naked and ſimply in it ſelf, I know "very well, that I neither enjoy it, nor get "any benefit by it, but by the vanity of "fantaſtical Opinion; and when I am dead, "I ſhall be leſs benefited by it ſtill. Let us therefore place our true Glory in our ſelves; becauſe it will remain with us, as long as we have our Being. "(*Mont. L.* 3) "None but you knows whether you are "Baſe and Cruel, or Loyal and Devout; "others do not ſee you; they only gueſs

"at

"at you; they don't ſee ſo well your hu-
"mour, or your cunning: And therfore
"be ſure not to mind what they think of
"you, but only what you think of your ſelf.

21. Upon ſome occaſions, I ſpeak of my own faults; which does often perplex my Enemies, and deprives 'em of the Pleaſure of diſcourſing about them. The reaſon of their trouble and perplexity is, becauſe they are perſwaded, that ſeeing I know my imperfections, I'll do my endeavour to mend 'em: They are not miſtaken in their Conjecture. "*(Ibid.)* A free and generous Con-
"feſſion diſarms Injuries.

22. When Men ſpeak ill of me, I get a double advantage by it. Firſt, I know by that means, their Character, and ſo I learn to miſtruſt 'em: Secondly, I know which is the weakeſt part of my ſelf, becauſe it has been attackt firſt, and therefore I fortify it, that others may not undertake the ſame Attack.

23. If a falſe Report goes abroad concerning me, I hope it will not laſt long: The Life which I lead, will juſtify my paſt Life: I juſtify my ſelf for no other reaſon, but becauſe I ought to do it out of Charity to my ſelf.

24. I wou'd not be angry, if any one ſhou'd affirm that I am ſick, when I am well: I am not angry neither, if I am accuſed, when I am innocent.

25. When

25. When a Man cries every time he is touched, 'tis a ſign that he is not very ſound. I ſhou'd think my ſelf very weak in my Mind, if I was too ſenſible to every thing that ſeems to attack my own Self-love.

26. If I am unjuſtly accuſed, I ſhall modeſtly juſtify my ſelf: If my Reaſons are not approved, my Innocence ſhall be my comfort: Perhaps they'll ſpare a Man, who makes no reſiſtance. "(*Prov. Turc.*) Tho' a Man "has never ſo many ill Words, yet a deaf "Man will tire him at laſt. If I don't ſilence Evil-ſpeaking by a virtuous Life, I ſhall at leaſt diſarm it. Innocence is a very pleaſant Refuge to thoſe who are perſecuted. The leſs I ſhall have occaſion to reprove my ſelf, the leſs I ſhall be concern'd to know what others ſay againſt me.

27. I have been told ſome troubleſome Truths, and yet I am not angry for it; becauſe I told them to my ſelf before. I obſerve my Conduct ſo narrowly, that I muſt needs know my faults. Seeing I know my faults, and I hear they are known to others, what can I do better than to mend 'em?

28. *N.* bears me an ill Will, he ſpeaks ill of me, he endeavours to prejudice me; is it not becauſe I have not a due regard for him? If we will do our ſelves juſtice, we ſhall find that we are ſeldom ill ſpoken of without a cauſe, and that few Men will take delight in prejudicing and offending

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us on purpoſe: We do often give occaſion to it.

29. *M.* ſpoke ill of me juſt now; I willingly forgive him; it was rather a ſudden Fit of Vivacity than a malicious Expreſſion. Thus we muſt endeavour to juſtify thoſe, who ſpeak ill of us, that we may be the leſs ſenſible to it.

30. I am told that ſome Body ſpoke ill of me; I am not at all ſurprized at it; for who can be ſecure from the Darts of an ill Tongue? (*Eſſais de Morale.*) It is certain that Men are free to ſpeak of the faults of others in their abſence. Some do it out of malice, others without any ill deſign, and by way of converſation, nay, ſome will do it with an appearance of a good intention, but few will abſtain from it. I ſhou'd therefore make my ſelf ridiculous, if I pretended to be the only Man that ſhall be ſpared: It is certain that if I was angry with thoſe Diſcourſes, I cou'd never get out of 'em.

31. Thoſe Diſcourſes are either true or altogether falſe: If they are true, were it not a horrible thing to be unconcern'd for my Faults, when they are known to God, and to be vexed, becauſe they are known to Men! If they are falſe and ill grounded, the Judgment of God who juſtifies me, is ſufficient to make me deſpiſe that of Men. (*Ibid.*) why ſhou'd it not have the ſame effect upon me, as the approbation of my Friends, and of thoſe whom I eſteem, which makes me ſlight what others can think or

ſay

ſay of me? Oh! How ſweet it is for me to comfort my ſelf in the Juſtice of God, for the injuſtice which Men can do me!

32. My ſilence has often contributed to ſtop the Mouth of detracting Men: When they ſaw that I was not concern'd for their Attacks, they did not care to attack me. Perhaps I ſhou'd have expoſed my ſelf to a ſecond Injury, if I had ſhew'd too great a reſentment for the firſt.

REFLECTIONS.

To comfort one's ſelf in a mean and low Condition.

1. IF a Great Man deſpiſes me, I preſently caſt my Eyes upon my ſmall Fortune, and I find that he is not altogether in the wrong, becauſe he has learn'd by the example of his Courtiers, to undervalue and ſlight every thing that does not reſemble his Grandeur: Afterwards I look upon my ſelf, and I am willing to think that my want of Merit, is the ground of his Contempt. I therefore endeavour to acquire what he ought to eſteem: But perhaps he will not eſteem me the more for it; 'tis no matter; I ſhall be more perfect; which is as good as his Eſteem.

2. You are raiſed above me; you precede me by reaſon of your Dignity; walk, therefore before me in the way of Perfecti-

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on, ſhew me a good Example: Thus you will humble me in my low condition, if I don't follow you.

3. To overcome the Enemies of the State, and to overcome ones ſelf; to make uſe of Battels, in order to increaſe one's Moderation and Wiſdom; to ſhew one's Clemency and Goodneſs in a Victory; to take Towns, and to win at the ſame time, the Hearts of their Inhabitants: To be equally dreaded and loved; to be altogether governed by Reaſon and Equity, and not by Prejudices and Opinion; to forgive others, without wanting to be forgiven, are things truly Great and worthy of the Admiration of Heaven and Earth. I could eaſily comfort my ſelf in my low and mean Condition, if I ſaw many ſuch Great Men.

4. Our true Grandeur does not conſiſt in depreſſing others, but in being Great in our ſelves, ſo that our Elevation be not the effect of their lowlineſs. True Grandeur is therefore in my power, and conſequently 'tis my fault, if I have it not: I muſt not therefore be afflicted for my Lowlineſs, ſeeing it is in my power to get out of it.

5. I bring my ſelf ſo low by the ſentiments I have of my ſelf, that it is impoſſible for any one to depreſs me more. The loweſt Step is the moſt ſteady, and the moſt ſtable; the Seat of conſtancy is placed there. Tho' Proud and Ambitious Men abhor it never ſo much; yet if I be placed there, I ſhall

ſhall not be uneaſy at it, becauſe I ſhall want no Body but my ſelf.

6. I find my ſelf very mean, when I conſider my ſelf, and meaner ſtill, when I go out of my ſelf, to conſider ſo many great things, which ſurround, and, as it were, abſorb me. My meanneſs, which is ſo well known to me, makes me familiar with Humility, and being endowed with Humility, I am very willing to uſe my ſelf to my low Condition.

7. I don't believe that there is any body who eſteems me leſs than I do: It is commonly ſaid that Men don't know themſelves; but I dare ſay that I am an exception to it: I know my ſelf, and that knowledge is the reaſon why I humble my ſelf more than any one can humble me. Sometimes I cannot indure my ſelf, becauſe of my great imperfections; but I hope that the averſion I have for my imperfection, will help me to get out of it.

8. Tho' I ſhou'd flatter my ſelf to be never ſo perfect, yet I ſhou'd always find ſome reaſon to humble my ſelf, by reflecting upon all the weakneſſes, which are common to me with all other Men, and upon my particular imperfections. This being ſo, can any one depreſs me more than I do?

9. When I humble my ſelf, I do it ſincerely, without pretending to have a right to humble others, or to prevent being cenſured by them, or to avoid their advices and reprimands.

10. If

10. If any one will humble me, upon the account of my ignorance, he cannot tell me any thing about it, but what I am very ſenſible of: For I am perſwaded that there is a world of things, which I am ignorant of, and I don't value thoſe which I know. What a ridiculous Pride is that, which is only grounded upon a great Reading and a good Memory! This has been my Learning for a long time, and it is alſo the Learning of moſt of our Learned Men.

11. 'Tis in vain for Great Men, who extend themſelves in their imagination, as much as ever they can, to look upon me as nothing, by reaſon of the little room which I take up in the World. I prevented them a great while ago by this Reflection, when I ſpoke thus to my ſelf: What room do I take up during all Eternity, in the midſt of all the Celeſtial Globes, and amongſt ſo many Creatures? How few are thoſe who know me! How few are thoſe, who think of me! How few are thoſe, over whom I have ſome power! What a vaſt number of Men, who are more powerful, more learned, more rich and wiſer than I am! He, who makes ſuch Reflections, may eaſily be an humble Man.

12. If I have no Intereſt with Great Men, by reaſon of my ſmall Fortune, all the better; I ſhall be leſs importuned by the Sollicitations of the little ones; I ſhall be leſs tempted to do unjuſt things; I ſhall

leſs

leſs depend upon Great Men, and conſequently leſs obliged to conſtrain my ſelf, that I may pleaſe 'em, to flatter 'em, to make Reports, to Cringe, and to comply with all their Paſſions.

13. What a ſweet thing it is for me, to enjoy a great Tranquillity in my low and mean Condition! As it is much better to ſleep with a good health, in a ſmall, low and narrow Couch, than to be tormented with a Sickneſs in a great Bed: (*Epictet.*) So it is better to be low in the World, with a contented mind, than to be Great in it, and at the ſame time vexed with Cares, as moſt Great Men are. I wou'd not certainly embark in a great Ship, well Manned, and loaded with Gold and rich Merchandizes, if I knew that it would ſink: So, I am not ambitious of living in a magnificent Palace, wherein I muſt expect to be full of Cares and Trouble.

14. If I am uneaſy in my low Condition, I ſhall think only of making my ſelf Great; and if I will make my ſelf Great, I ſhall continually grow little; I ſhall ſubject my ſelf, to domineer over others; I ſhall ſubmit to all ſorts of ſlavery, to get Honours; laſtly, I muſt ſtoop, to raiſe my ſelf: But, if I muſt be low, I had as good be as I am.

15. The plainneſs of my Goods is leſs troubleſome to me, than if they were magnificent: I don't love a Bed, which was made rather to ſerve Ambition, than to

ſleep in: I don't conſider ſo much the Luſtre of Magnificence, as the trouble which it gives. "*Mont. l.* 3. I am much for ne- "ceſſary things, and not for a Parade. *St.* "*Evrem.* They, who live in great State, "are truly poor; they look up and down "for Money, with great trouble and unea- "ſineſs, to afford new pleaſures to others; "and whilſt they make a ſhew of their "plenty, which ſtrangers enjoy more than "they; they feel their indigence in ſecret, "with their Wives and Children, by rea- "ſon of the importunity of their Creditors, "who vex them, and becauſe of the ill "ſtate of their Affairs, which are almoſt "ruined. *Mont. l.* 3. We defraud our ſelves "of uſeful things, to live according to the "common Opinion. The ſumptuoſity of Great Men, is chiefly owing to the admiration of the little ones.

16. Ambition will have a Theatre, and therefore I am afraid of it: It does not permit a Man to be in himſelf, at home, and his own Maſter. (*ibid.*) "Indeed the "Votaries of Ambition are very well re- "warded, to be always expoſed to the pub- "lick View, as a Statue in a Market-place. "They can't be private in their very Privy.

17. The Great and Little Ones have commonly the ſame Spirit, and the ſame Principles in their Actions and Enterprizes; only with this difference, that Great Names are beſtowed upon the Actions of Great Men. "I find, ſays *Montagne*, (*l.* 1. *c.* 25.) "that

"that the firſt Seats are commo nly taken
"by thoſe, who are leſs intelligent, and
"that a great Fortune is ſeldom attended
"with great Knowledge. I have obſerved,
"that whilſt ſome Men were diſcourſing
"at the upper end of a Table, of the beau-
"ty of a Piece of Hangings, or of the taſte
"of Malmſey, a great many fine ſtrokes
"were loſt at the other end of it. *Charron.*
"Grandeur and Power are very much de-
"ſired by every Body: The reaſon of it is,
"becauſe what is good in them appears
"outwardly, whereas the Evil that is
"in them, lies in the inſide; beſides, to
"Command others, is look'd upon as a
"great, difficult, noble and God-like thing:
"And therefore, Great Men are eſteem'd
"and reverenced, as if they were more
"than Men. Such an Opinion is uſeful, to
"make People reſpectful and obedient, and
"to preſerve the Publick Peace. But af-
"ter all, they are Men caſt in the ſame
"Mould with others, and very often nei-
"ther ſo generous, nor ſo well qualified as
"many ordinary Men: One wou'd think
"that their Actions, being of great weight
"and importance, are alſo produced by
"weighty and important Cauſes: But
"there is no ſuch thing, they are produced
"by the ſame Springs as thoſe of ordinary
"People. The ſame reaſon which makes
"us quarrel with our Neighbours, will ex-
"cite a War amongſt Princes; the ſame
"reaſon which moves us to get a Foot-boy

"whipt, moves a King to ruin a whole "Province: Their Actions proceed from "the ſame inconſiderable Cauſes; but they "have a greater power than we: A Fly "and an Elephant have the ſame deſires. "Laſtly, beſides the Paſſions, Defects, and "Natural Infirmities, which they have in "common with the leaſt of their Adorers, "they have alſo frequently ſome Vices "and Inconveniencies, which Grandeur "and Power bring along with them, and "which are peculiar to them. When I conſider all thoſe things, I am not at all afflicted, becauſe I am ſo far from being a Great Man.

18. Being not deſirous to be a Great Man, and being contented with the low Condition I am in, I converſe more willingly with my Equals, than with thoſe that are above me; I am more inclin'd to keep Company with thoſe, who receive me with open Arms, than with thoſe who turn their backs to me.

19. My Reaſon neither yields nor ſubmits before Great Men; I do only bow the Knee. Too great a diſtruſt of ones ſelf produces a baſe Fear, which, depriving our Minds of their Liberty and Aſſurance, makes our Reaſonings weak, our Words trembling, and our Actions faint. A Man with ſuch an apparent weakneſs, is look'd upon as being truly weak, and conſequently very contemptible. Heretofore I ſeem'd to be very weak, when I appeared before Great

Great Men; their Elevation depreſt me ſo low, the Splendor which ſurrounds them, dazzled me ſo much, that I was before them as if I had not been, that is, weak, obſcure, and annihilated. But ever ſince I have ſhaken the yoke of Opinion, I reſpect 'em, becauſe they are my Superiours; I obey them, becauſe they are my Maſters; I eſteem them, if they have a perſonal Merit; becauſe it is a Tribute which I ought to pay to Virtue: But I dont annihilate my ſelf out of a baſeneſs unworthy of Him, who knows things as they are in themſelves.

20. If I ſeek the favour of Great Men, the Credit of thoſe that are Powerful, a Glorious Reputation, Noble Imployments, and great Riches; it will be the way to make my ſelf a conſiderable Man in this World, out of which I muſt go in a ſhort time: But if I deſpiſe all thoſe pretended advantages, it will be the way to ſettle my ſelf happily in the other World, out of which I ſhall never go. I chooſe to deſpiſe 'em.

21. Has a Great Man a different Sleep from mine, a different Smelling, a different Feeling, and a different Sight? No: Wherein therefore do his Pleaſures ſurpaſs mine? In ſome outward Differences, which are neither his, nor in him. "*Mont. l.* 1. *c.* 42. "Kings are of a worſe Condition than "private Men, in the very Enjoyment of "Pleaſures; becauſe eaſe and facility take

"away the half-ſweet and half-ſowre taſte "which we find in them. Do you think "that Singing Boys take great delight in "Muſick? Satiety makes it rather tedious "to them. He, who drinks before he is "thirſty, can take no great pleaſure in drinking.

22. Is a Man greater, when he is in poſſeſſion of a conſiderable Dignity, when he has obtained a noble Imployment, when he has purchaſed a vaſt Eſtate? In order to anſwer that Queſtion, I conſider whether I ſhou'd be greater if I was placed upon a Gold and Silver Mountain, and whether I ſhou'd be taller, if I lodged in one of the higheſt Towers in the World.

23. All the true and neceſſary conveniencies which Princes enjoy, are common to them with their Subjects: Will a Man be better ſerved by a Duke, than by an ordinary Servant?

24. I have no hand in thoſe great Events, which attract the Eyes and Admiration of the People; but becauſe I don't admire 'em, I don't deſire at all to have any hand in them; and I do very attentively conſider what may be the cauſes of 'em, that I may not be troubled for having no hand in them. It is often neceſſary for the honour of the moſt conſiderable Events, that their cauſes ſhou'd be unknown. How inconſiderable are all thoſe things in the Eyes of God!

25. I am not at all aſhamed to be humbled; but I am only aſhamed to deſerve that any Body ſhou'd humble me.

26. The great variety of Taſtes hinders me from being diſcouraged, in hopes that ſome will not reject with Contempt what I ſay, and what I do. The ſame Variety hinders me from growing proud, tho' I be never ſo well approved; becauſe I fancy that ſome will cenſure what is approved by others.

27. They, who are in high places, muſt expect to be very much toſſed: they are obſerved, controuled, examined, and envied; they are ſubject to a great ſtunning; they hurt themſelves much, when they fall; and thoſe falls are very frequent.

28. I eſteem much more the lawful and reaſonable ways of obtaining great Dignities, than the Dignities themſelves.

29 I am told ſometimes, why don't you Court Great Men? What an Inſolence! I anſwer nothing; but they, who know me, anſwer for me, that the reaſon of it is, becauſe I don't ſuffer my ſelf to be governed by Vanity and Intereſt, to the prejudice of my Tranquillity and Happineſs.

30. The only thing I am ambitious of, is to have a Merit worthy of the Grandeur, which is the Object of other Men's Ambition. If I don't attain to Grandeur, I ſhall think my ſelf Great enough, provided I deſerve it.

31. To deſpiſe Honours, Dignities and Riches, is a ſign of a Great Soul. I draw this Conſequence from that Propoſition; the poſſeſſion of 'em is not therefore a ſign of a Great Soul.

32. Tho' the Fate of Great Men be never ſo different from that of the Little Ones, yet they have the ſame Origin and the ſame end as the Little ones, and are ſubject to the ſame alterations and changes. The whole weight of their Fortune, is only ſupported by a weak and mortal Life. They carry their Grandeur, which is their Treaſure, in ſome Veſſels of Clay, which, tho' Painted and Gilt over, are of a brittle Matter. The Great and Little Ones, the Rich and Poor, rotten all alike. The Light, tho' never ſo bright, if it be put out, leaves but an ill ſmell behind it: So, Great Men, thoſe great Conquerors, who like dreadful Comets, have ſignalized themſelves by the deſolation of the World, leave nothing behind them but Infection and Rottenneſs. All the Luſtre of their Grandeur is loſt in the obſcurity of their Graves. It is true, that Great Men, who are not animated with the Spirit of Religion, make the ſad Ceremony of their Funeral, the laſt Refuge of their Vanity, to keep themſelves up after the fatal Blow. *M. du Jarry.* They endeavour to fix to their Memory, that which Death is going to take away from them; and gathering, as it were, the ruins of their Glory in ſome pompous Encomiums, ſtately

ly *Mauſoleums*, and magnificent Inſcriptions, they make a kind of a Charm of that Funeral Pomp, to remove from their minds the mortifying Image of their ſad Deſtiny. How deplorable is the blindneſs of Humane Pride, which fills Men in a manner with their own emptineſs; which turns the ſaddeſt warnings, which God gives 'em in order to humble 'em, into the moſt dangerous Illuſions, wherewith they feed themſelves; which endeavours to fix upon Braſs a tranſitory Grandeur, that paſſes away with ſo much rapidity; which places the remains of its power upon the unavoidable Rock, againſt which it ſplits, and endeavours to ſecure to itſelf a portion of a worldy Life in the very Empire of Death it ſelf!

33. There is nothing Men are ſo careful to hide as Pride; which ſhews that Pride muſt needs be a very ſhameful Vice. When I was governed by Vanity, I ſhou'd have been aſhamed to appear ſo vain as I was. I am aſhamed now that I ſuffered my ſelf to be governed by a Vice, which I ſhou'd have been ſo aſhamed to ſhew.

34. Ever ſince I endeavour to ſtifle my own Pride, I don't complain of the Pride of others: Their Vanity was inſupportable to me; becauſe I fancied, either that they had a mind to take away from me as much perfection, as they aſcribed to themſelves; or becauſe the good Opinion I had

had of my ſelf, was incompatible with the deſpiſing way of Vain and Proud Men.

35. The more I ſeem willing, in the low condition I am in, to raiſe my ſelf above others, the more I ſhall exaſperate 'em; and by exaſperating them, I ſhall make 'em ſo many Enemies to me, and they will endeavour to trouble, diſquiet, afflict and deſtroy me. I'll do what I can to be ſtronger than others, without intimating that I think any Body to be weaker than I.

36. Be ſilent, Pride, Vanity, Preſumption, who notwithſtanding my mean and low condition, go about to perſwade me, that I am a Man ſomewhat conſiderable in the World: How can I believe you, when I think that aſſoon as I depart this Life, this ſame World will not perceive that I am gone out of it? So true it is, that I am very uſeleſs in it.

37. Grandeur ſhuns me; I am glad it prevents me: For it has ſo many Charms to inflame Vanity, that I wou'd ſhun it, if it did not ſhun me. A Man who receives ſome Honours, is very much tempted to think himſelf worthy of Honour; ſo that he will often be contented with what he thinks to be, without endeavouring to become ſuch as he is not.

38. If I look upon a Great Man afar off, he dazzles me, he prepoſſeſſes me in his favour, I admire him and his Grandeur; but if I come near him, the perſonal Defects, which I obſerve in him, do very much temper

temper, with reſpect to me, the Luſtre he borrows from his Rank and Dignity.

39. *(Eſſais de Morale)* A Great Man is more than one Man in his Idea; he is a Man ſurrounded with all thoſe, who belong to him,and he fancies that he has as many Arms as all of them together; becauſe he moves and diſpoſes of 'em at his pleaſure. I look upon him therefore as a Man, who can do a great deal by others; but if I ſeperate others from him,I look upon him as another Man.

40. I don't love to make a Buſtle in the World, and to converſe much with Great Men; and therefore I am not at all mortified to find my ſelf excluded from their Company, by reaſon of my ſmall Fortune. I can be a ſolitary Man, when I am obliged to be amongſt 'em: I withdraw my Soul from the Crowd: I always keep to my ſelf a Back-Room, which is altogether mine, to make it my chief Retreat andRefuge of Tranquillity and true Liberty. There I ſtand out of the way of the Vulgar opinions of the World.

41. As I have no Ambition, ſo I have no averſion for Solitude: If I was ambitious, a retired Life wou'd be inſupportable to me. In effect, how can one reconcile the Glory, which Ambition ſeeks, with the Repoſe, which Solitude requires?

42. I deſire to be better pleaſed when I am at home, than when I am with Great Men, or ſomewhere elſe, and I am really better

better pleaſed at home. I have learn'd long enough to be alone. I do ſo much prefer a Solitary Life to the trouble of a publick one, that I had rather be always alone, than obliged to be always in Company.

43. I do perfectly apprehend in a retired Life, that it is a very great unhappineſs for a Man to be too well known to the World, and too much unknown to himſelf. No Man can perfect himſelf, without knowing himſelf; and one may be very imperfect, and at the ſame time very well known to others. I learn beſt to know my ſelf in a quiet Retreat; becauſe I am no longer diſtracted by an infinity of Objects, which I find in the World, which attract my Eyes and all my Reflections, without permitting me to reflect in the leaſt upon my ſelf. When I ſtudy my ſelf, I know my miſery, and therefore I humble my ſelf; I know my weakneſs, and therefore I miſtruſt my ſelf; I know that I cannot be ſatisfied with the poſſeſſion of any Creature, and therefore I raiſe my ſelf above 'em, to lie in the Boſom of the Creator, who alone can fill up the Capacity of my Soul, and the Extent of my deſires.

44. Fortune has placed me in a very indifferent ſituation; but I like it ſo well, I am ſo well pleaſed with it, that one wou'd think I placed my ſelf in it with Fortune's conſent.

45. A retired Life is very ſweet to me, becauſe I am not troubled with the tumult of

of Affairs, wherewith the World is ſo much agitated. I am neither awakened nor importuned with the daily noiſe of ſo many People, who go about their buſineſs. I don't Court thoſe Men, who are called *Great*, becauſe they have a *great* Train, a *great* Equipage, a *great* Table, *great* Palaces; becauſe one muſt take *great* pains to approach 'em, and *great* care to pleaſe 'em, and after a ſervice of a *great* many years, one muſt leave it with *great* contempt, *great* trouble, and *great* poverty.

46. What a Pleaſure, not to be in a place, where one muſt always beware of Cheat and Treaſon!

47. The *great* World, as one may call it, ſeems to me very dangerous, becauſe it comprehends a great many wicked Men, and becauſe it is extremely difficult for thoſe, who are obliged to converſe with them, to forbear hating or imitating them. He, who hates 'em muſt expect to be perſecuted by them; he, who imitates them, corrupts himſelf: Two ſad Extremities indeed.

48. I have got ſuch a Habit of being alone, that I hate Gaming, Publick Walks, and all other ſuch Diverſions: It makes me love ſtudy, it accuſtoms me to reflect upon my ſelf, it renders me attentive to my Duty, and diſpoſes me to diſcharge it.

49. Some Men think to juſtify the eagerneſs, which they ſhew, to raiſe themſelves in the World, when inſulting thoſe, who are contented with a mean Fortune, they tell

tell them, that we are not made ſo much for ourſelves as for the Publick. I ſhou'd believe 'em, when they ſay ſo, were it not that I believe they are acted by Ambition.

50. I am not *Great*, that is, I am none of thoſe, to whom one may ſay; "Do you "think that a Man will open his Heart to "you, whilſt you Chamber is always ſhut "up to him? Can you expect any true and "ſincere word from a Man, who dares not "tell you, Good Morrow? I am not *Great*, that is, I am not Covetous, or I am not always expoſed to the Covetouſneſs of others, or no Body can ſay of me, what *Comines* ſays of the ill Education of the Great Men of his time: "They have no "tincture of Learning, they are not under "the care of any one Man; they have "ſome Governours, who are acquainted "with their Affairs, but they themſelves "know nothing of it: I have often ſeen "their Servants thrive by reaſon of their "Ignorance, and lead them by the Noſe; "and if any one of 'em happens by chance "to enquire into his own Affairs, it is ſo "late, that it ſignifies but little. I am not *Great*, that is, I receive no honours of Men, which make me forget the honour I owe to God; I am not in danger of rejecting any other Law of my Will, but my own Will; I have not ſo great a power, as to commit a Sin without any ſcruple, and without fearing to be puniſhed for it. I am not *Great*, that is, I am not always drunk with

with the ſweet Poyſon of Flattery, (*M. de Sacy,*) and ſo I can taſte the bitterneſs of Truth; whereas if I lived in Grandeur, Truth durſt not approach me: Great Men muſt go and meet Truth, if they are deſirous to know it; for no Body dares go and meet 'em, to ſhew it to them. How great a regard muſt one have for thoſe, who live in Grandeur and Plenty? The reſpect, which the Idea of Grandeur imprints in the minds of Men, ſtops the Mouths of thoſe, who approach Great Men, and hinders 'em from telling them any Truth, which they might be offended at: Nay, the beſt Men are contented to pity them, without daring to reprove 'em. Every thing that raiſes Men in the World, as Riches, Power, and Authority, makes 'em every day more and more conceited of their own Opinions, both becauſe thoſe things render others Complaiſant and Credulous, and becauſe they are leſs uſed to be contradicted, and therefore more nice and touchy. They are ſeldom told of their miſtakes, and ſo they uſe themſelves to think that they are never miſtaken, and they are ſurprized, when any one goes about to ſhew them, that they are ſubject to miſtakes as well as other Men. Laſtly, Great Men do ſeldom know the Truth, but by ſuch Perſons as are no great lovers of it. Every degree of Grandeur is an obſtacle to Truth; and whoever has a mind to raiſe himſelf higher in the World, muſt

muſt expect to be a greater Stranger to Truth.

51. I don't envy, but I deplore the Fate of Great Men, who being bound to diſcharge the Duties of the Station they are in, which expoſes 'em to the publick view, are the Slaves of thoſe who obey them; who being the only Witneſſes of their own cares and trouble, are in ſecret the Victims of that falſe Deity, which their Courtiers adore in publick; who finding no new thing in the Purple, wherein they were Born, feel at every moment the Cares and Sorrows which it covers; who offering to our ſight a meer Phantom of Felicity, have the Thorns of their Diadems thruſt into their Hearts, whilſt they wear the Flowers thereof upon their Foreheads; and who ſighing ſometimes after the happy obſcurity of thoſe, who envy their Grandeur, ſeem to have received the Luſtre and Glory of it only for others, whilſt they keep the whole weight thereof for themſelves. (M. *du Jarry*)

52. He, whom no Body minds, does not care for Magnificence, or any other worldly Vanity: 'Tis the advantage of a ſmall Fortune. *N.* wou'd not have ſo very fine Goods, nor ſo much *China* Ware, and ſo many *Pendulums*, if he did not expect to ſee ſome Men in his Houſe, who will praiſe him for thoſe trifles. As for me, I praiſe him only as much, as I think he does perſonally deſerve it.

53. It.

It is as great a Wiſdom for a Man to reſign an Employment, when he knows that he is no longer fit for it, as to make himſelf worthy of it. I admired *P.* as much, when he reſigned the Place, which his great Age did not permit him to fill up, as when he obtain'd it by reaſon of his Merit. What a noble Science, to know one's ſelf well! What a noble Courage, to know how to yield! What a noble Retreat, when it is made ſeaſonably! A Man is capable of all thoſe noble things, when he has a reaſonable Indifferency for Worldly Grandeurs.

54. Becauſe I believe that my Merit is as inconſiderable as my Fortune, I don't love to ſhew my ſelf. I am ſo uſed to undervalue my ſelf, that I fancy others have reaſon to deſpiſe me. When I perceive that I am uſeleſs, I retire without expecting that any Body ſhou'd tell me ſo: Why ſhou'd I deſire to be taken for another Man, than I think my ſelf to be? If I ſhou'd reſolve to ſtay, ſome Body wou'd let me know that I am of no manner of uſe; and perhaps I ſhou'd be obliged to make a ſhameful and a forced Retreat, when I might have retired willingly, and with honour. "It is "a trouble to me, to be troubleſome to "others. (*Montag.*)

55. Learning, a great Capacity, noble Projects, and glorious Actions, whereby we are known to others, are often the cauſe why we don't know our ſelves. We

are then ſo taken up with outward things, that we don't know the Secrets of our inward part. I never deſcended into my ſelf, but I found my ſelf another Man, than what I ſeem'd to be outwardly.

56. It is not at all likely that I ſhall make my Fortune at Court, but I am not at all ſorry for't; for I don't love to be uneaſy; to depend intirely upon the will of other Men; to ſpeak at all times otherwiſe than I think; to court ſome Perſons, who wou'd be perhaps indifferent to me, and yet I muſt ſeem to love 'em; to praiſe what I don't eſteem; to feed my ſelf with hopes; to do a thouſand uſeleſs ſervices, before one of 'em be liked; to live for others, and not for my ſelf; to be a perfect Slave to the Paſſions of other Men; to be governed by their humours, and to make all their cares and deſires my own; to walk always with a Mask on; to ſeem to deſire what I do moſt abhor: In ſhort, I don't love a place, where one muſt rather know how to ſuffer, than how to do good Actions; where Calumny is always believed, and Innocence ſeldom protected, and where a Man is no leſs troubled with the fear of a Fall, than he has been tormented with the deſire of his Elevation *(Barry.)*

57. I don't find that Great and Rich Men laugh more willingly and more heartily than the Poor and Little ones: On the contrary, all things duly conſidered, I find that the Joy of the latter is more compleat

and

and more frequent. Grandeur is always attended with great cares and ſorrows, which ſeldom fail to trouble the Pleaſures of thoſe, who enjoy it.

58. The greateſt Men are in a manner the greateſt Slaves. A Peaſant has nothing to mind but his Cottage and Family; whereas a Great Man muſt mind his vaſt Eſtate in Land, his noble Houſes, and a great number of Domeſticks and Officers; ſo that he is a Slave to his very Slaves. An ordinary Servant is enough to make him put off his Journey, tho' he be never ſo much in haſte. (*Father Lamy.*)

59. I don't deſire by no means to be one of thoſe Great Men, who are, as it has been well obſerved, as ſo many Slaves ſo much the more unhappy, becauſe they fancy that they are free. The one applauds himſelf, becauſe he is in the way of Fortune, and ſeems to have ſome reaſon to hope for a conſiderable Settlement. But what conſtraint! He muſt continually have a watchful Eye upon his Concerns; make himſelf complaiſant even to baſeneſs; indure all the Sorrows, which commonly attend an uncertain Fortune and doubtful hopes; he muſt bear the open attacks of his Enemies, the ſecret treaſons of thoſe who envy him, the malicious jealouſies of his Equals, the ſharp Raileries of his Superiours, the odd Caprices of his Maſters; all thoſe things he muſt bear, for an Honour grounded upon Opinion, for ſome inconſtant Favours, and for ſome peri-

riſhable Riches. It is true, that the Authority which a noble Employment gives, the Reſpect it creates, the Revenues it affords, the Rank it procures, and the Power it beſtows of obliging one's Friends, and of raiſing one's Relations, and of being revenged of one's Enemies; It is true that all thoſe things ſtir Ambition, inflames Cupidity, and are extremely pleaſing to Self-Love: This is the fair ſide of Grandeur: This is the moſt engaging thing in it. But if I penetrate into the inſide of thoſe fair Appearances, if I conſider the conſtraint, ſlavery, and conſtant attendance which ſuch an Employment requires, which ſpoils the health of the Perſon who enjoys it, which keeps him at a diſtance from his Relations, which hinders him from having any correſpondence with them, which torments him with trouble and cares, that he may diſcharge his Duty, remove envious Men, ſatisfy his Maſters, and ſtand upon his guard againſt his Enemies, and all that for a Glory, which ſoon paſſes away, for ſome imaginary Honours, and for ſome periſhable Riches, which will ſoon ſteal away from him, or which he muſt leave in a ſhort time; (for Life is very ſhort) I am ſo far from ſeeking ſuch a Grandeur, that I ſhou'd be afraid to obtain it.

60. I confeſs that there are ſome Great Men, who diſtinguiſh themſelves, ſome by their Courage and Valour, others by their Eloquence, by their Knowledge of Arts, and

and by a vaſt Capacity; ſome by their Politicks, by their noble Projects, by their great skill in Affairs, and by ſome Heroical Actions; but if we ſaw thoſe Great Men in private, what Weakneſs might we not find in them! What a ridiculous Vanity! What a ſhameful Jealouſy! What niceneſs about Trifles! What Childiſhneſs! What Meanneſs! Which wou'd make 'em bluſh, if they were known to the meaneſt of Men!

61. I expect at the hour of Death, that *Great Man*, who deſpiſes me ſo much, that he takes it ill that I ſhould make bold to compare my ſelf with him.

REFLECTIONS.

To comfort one's ſelf in a State of Dependance and Servitude.

1. HE, who obeys willingly, avoids that which is moſt intolerable in a State of Servitude, I mean, to do any thing againſt his will. It is not at all an unhappy thing for me to be obliged to perform an Act of Obedience; but it wou'd be an unhappy thing, if I performed it againſt my Will. What a madneſs to ſuffer one's ſelf to be dragged rather than to follow! He, who will not be contented with the condition he is in, is his own Tormenter,

2. I do willingly what I am to do, to make it eaſy to me, and to do it well; for what a Man does againſt his Will, is never ſo well done, as what he does out of inclination. Tho' a thing be never ſo eaſy, it becomes difficult, when 'tis done againſt one's Will.

3. I am not at all deſirous to Command, wherefore I find it leſs difficult to Obey. He, that will command well, muſt know how to order, govern and direct others; how cou'd I therefore Command, ſeeing I have much ado to govern my ſelf? I had rather follow than guide, go thro' a beaten Road than ſhew it, and anſwer for my ſelf only, than for others and my ſelf too.

4. We preſerve a kind of Liberty, when we willingly obey thoſe, who may force us to it: A Man acts freely, when he does willingly what he does.

5. I ſubmit to my Superiours without any reſiſtance, to acquit my ſelf of what I owe to their Authority; and if they have any Merit, I eſteem them alſo without any reluctancy, to aquit my ſelf of what I owe to their Virtue.

6. I find it pleaſant and advantageous for me, to obey my Maſters and Directors, becauſe it ſeems to me to be ſo difficult to make a good choice, and to keep in the right way, that I think my ſelf free from a great many cares, when any one, that is more knowing than I ſhews me with Authority what I am to do, and not to do:

I am then very willing to joyn the Authority, I ought to have over my ſelf, to that of my Directors.

7. There is one thing, amongſt others, which makes me eaſy, when I am obliged to pay any Obedience; I mean, that I ſhall not be anſwerable for my Actions, nor for their Conſequences.

8. Why ſhould I refuſe to obey, ſeeing Obedience is ſo neceſſary to maintain the Society? If one Man was not intruſted with the Command, how many diſorders wou'd ariſe from the ſeveral paſſions and different Intereſts of private Men!

9. He, who reaſons too much about a Command, does not obey as he ought to do. I obey, and I leave the care of making Reflections to him, who Commands; 'tis his Buſineſs, and not mine.

10. I know no ſervitude more ſhameful, than to ſerve one's own Luſts, to be governed by one's Paſſions, and carried away by Opinion. (*Horace l.* 2. *Sat.* 7.) "Who "is it that deſerves to be called a Free Man? "The Wiſe Man; he, who has the Com- "mand of himſelf; he, whom neither Po- "verty, nor Death, nor Chains can fright- "en; who can reſiſt his Paſſions, and de- "ſpiſe Honours; who is altogether ſhut up "within himſelf; who is above all the at- "tempts of outward things; and who can- "not be hurt by the greateſt Blows of For- "tune. Tho' I be never ſo dependent, yet I am not to be pitied, if I preſerve ſuch a liberty.

11. I ſhall be always eaſy, notwithſtanding the Authority which others have over me, if I have the Command of my ſelf. With ſuch a Power, I ſhall care for nothing, I ſhall eagerly deſire nothing but what deſerves it, I ſhall be always at eaſe.

REFLECTIONS.

For the Comfort of thoſe of a low Extraction.

1. I Had rather be known by ſome good Actions, than by a Noble Birth. My good Actions are my own Work, but my Noble Birth is only the work of my Parents. *Marius* expreſſes himſelf thus in *Saluſt.* "I "confeſs that I want the advantage of a "Noble Birth; but my Actions afford me a "greater one, and they who upbraid me "with it, are guilty of an extreme Injuſtice, in not permitting me to value my "ſelf upon my own Virtue, as much as "they value themſelves upon the Virtue "of others.

2. Why ſhou'd any Body wonder to ſee ſome Perſons of the dregs of the People raiſe themſelves and made Noble? Why ſhou'd they deſpiſe 'em? Have not the moſt Illuſtrious Families had the like Beginning, if we go as far as their firſt Origin? *(Mademoiſelle de Gournay)* "A Noble "Race, to ſpeak the beſt of it, is that, "which being Ignoble at firſt, was made Noble

" Noble in length of Time: An Ignoble " Race is alſo that, the Nobleneſs where- " of has been loſt the ſame way. They who are Nobly deſcended, think it a great Honour, to be able to ſhew that their Nobility is very ancient; but tho' it be never ſo ancient, there is a certain time, which is a *nec plus ultra* for them, beyond which they dare not go; becauſe they wou'd find at laſt a great deal of Miſery and Meanneſs. The nearer Men come to their firſt Origin, the greater reſemblance they find in their Genealogies; and at laſt, when they are arrived there, they find no manner of difference among themſelves, they are all Equal. If you have ſome ancient Titles, which prove that you are much above me by reaſon of your Birth, I have ſome more ancient than yours, which prove that I am by my Birth as great a Man as you.

3. That, which I eſteem moſt in a Noble Extraction, is the ſtrict obligation it lays upon Noble-Men, not to degenerate from the Virtue of ther Anceſtors.

4. Thoſe Coats of Arms, thoſe Titles, all that out-ſide of Nobility, make thoſe, who have 'em, better known than they are truly Ennobled by them. A Noble-Man is very much look'd upon, but he is more deſpiſed ſtill, when he does not keep up his Nobility: And it is no ſmall matter for a Man to keep up worthily his Noble Extraction. *(Petrarch.)* " The great luſtre of your " Family

" Family, does but keep you from living " a private Life, and ſo deprives you of " the greateſt Pleaſure you can enjoy, and " of the means of being your own Maſter. " Whatever you do in private, will be the " Subject of publick Converſations; every " Body will be curious to know how you " live at Home; and one wou'd think that " your Anceſtors have appointed all your " Neighbours as ſo many Spies, to obſerve " your Actions, and whether you imitate " your Predeceſſors. You'll ſhare in the Glory of your Anceſtors, according as you endeavour to be like them.

5. I eſteem more thoſe, who begin the Nobility of their Families, than thoſe in whom, and not by whom it is continued. I don't mind ſo much a Man's Name, as his Actions.

6. Nobility is like a Cypher, which is worth nothing, when alone, tho' it encreaſes the value of Numbers, when added to them: Nobility alone is not a Merit in a Man, who boaſts of it: It is another Man's Good which he uſurps; imaginary Quality, wherewith he flatters himſelf; a Sanctuary which he builds near his Grave; and a borrowed Light which he makes uſe of.

RE-

REFLECTIONS,

For the Comfort of thoſe who are Sick and full of Pain.

1. I Take great care not to be too ſenſible to Pleaſures, leſt I ſhou'd be too ſenſible to Pain.

2. If I ſuffer much, I muſt take Patience; either my pain will be ſoon over, or I ſhall die: Violent Pains do not commonly laſt long; the more violent they are, the more reaſon I have to believe that they will be ſoon over.

3. The more I ſhall be tender, the more my Pains will be grievous to me. It is with Pain as it is with an Enemy; when we are afraid of him, we give him a greater Courage.

4. When I am ſick, or afflicted with any Pain, I withdraw, as it were, my Soul, as much as I can, to converſe with it, to delight in it, to divert it from its Sufferings. It is certain that if I don't leſſen by that means the ſenſe of my Pains, I don't make it worſe by it. The reaſon why we are ſo impatient in the ſufferings of our Bodies, is becauſe we don't uſe our ſelves to delight in our Souls.

REFLECTIONS.

For the Comfort of thoſe, who loſe their Eſtates, their Friends and Relations.

1. THO' a Man be never ſo Rich, his Mind will be tormented with Sorrows, and his Body with Sickneſs; why ſhould I be therefore ſo much afflicted for the loſs of my Riches, ſeeing they cannot preſerve me from thoſe Evils?

2. That I may not be troubled for what I have loſt, I rejoyce for what is left to me; and if there is nothing left to me, but what is common to me with all Men, I am contented with it. For I will not be Ingenious in tormenting my ſelf, and therefore I will not add Grief, Impatience, and Deſpair to the loſs I have ſuſtained.

3. I look upon all the good things of the World which we enjoy, as ſo many borrowed things, wherefore if they are taken from me, I fancy that I reſtore them, inſtead of loſing them: I was perſwaded that they would not remain with me always; I had already given 'em up by my indifferency, before they left me out of neceſſity.

4. If I have a Suit in Law, I inſtruct my Judges, without endeavouring to ſurprize 'em; I ſollicit them without deſiring that they ſhou'd be unjuſt; if they give Judgment for me, I uſe it without any hardſhip or revenge; if they give Judgment

ment againſt me, I ſubmit to it without murmuring.

5. When I loſe my Friends and Relations, I give to Nature, Gratitude, and Friendſhip, what they require of me; and afterwards I endeavour to give to Reaſon what Time wou'd not fail to obtain. I don't make an end of my Tears out of wearineſs, but out of Reflection, being not willing that Time ſhou'd have the honour to wipe 'em off.

6. I ſhall ſoon follow thoſe, whom Death has raviſhed from me: I am upon the ſame Journey with them; they did only ſet out a little ſooner than I: I knew very well that we ſhou'd part ſome time or other.

REFLECTIONS.

For the Comfort of thoſe, who are obliged to Work.

1. IF I get a Habit of Working, the moſt difficult things become eaſy to me; nay, I am thereby diſpoſed to be patient in my pains.

2. I am willing to work more than I need, that I may be fitter to do what is neceſſary: It is a good thing to keep one's ſelf in breath; for too much Reſt makes one heavy and weak.

3. When I have nothing to do, that I may

may not be Idle, I reflect upon what I have done, or what I muſt do: I am always afraid that if my Mind grows ſlack, I ſhall grow ſlack in my Duty: Too great an Idleneſs makes a little Work intolerable: He, who does nothing, will learn to do ill things. Idleneſs is not ſo much a particular Vice, as a general occaſion for all ſorts of Vices.

4. Moſt of thoſe, who hate Working, feel at laſt the inconveniences of Poverty. An Idle Man ſpends what he has, and gets nothing; he is a Prey to ſeveral Pleaſures, which coſt him very dear; and wants courage and reſolution to maintain his concerns

5. Some Men make themſelves ridiculous, by applying themſelves to ſuch things as have no manner of relation with their profeſſion; becauſe the Publick is perſwaded that they neither excel, nor cannot excel in them: I wou'd never adviſe a Clergy-Man to write a Book about Military Architecture, nor an Engineer to write a Commentary upon *St. Paul*'s Epiſtles: I ſhall ſooner believe a *Civilian*, when he explains to me the Difficulties of the *Digeſts*, than when he undertakes to demonſtrate to me the Quadrature of the Circle. I ſhall be more willing to follow the advice of a Phyſitian about the uſe of Simples, the properties whereof he ought to know by his profeſſion, than his inſtructions to get out of the tricks of an Attorney. Nevertheleſs, Men are commonly tempted to go out of their Sphere, under

under pretence of doing more good, and they have much ado to keep within the bounds of their Profeſſion. (*M. Flechier.*) They who are deſtinated to a ſolitary Life, will return into the World, under pretence of Charity; inſtead of minding their own Salvation, they go about to ſhew that they are able to promote the Salvation of others: And ſo intangling themſelves by degrees in the Affairs and Intrigues of the World, whilſt they think to ſave the Souls of other Men, they loſe their own. Others, whoſe buſineſs it is to live an active Life, and ſerve their Neighbours, will unſeaſonably ſet up for Contemplative Men, and leave off ſome neceſſary Practices for ſome uſeleſs Reflections. Thus a Magiſtrate under pretence of Piety, becomes often moroſe and inacceſſible to thoſe, who ſtand in need of his help; and being taken up with unſeaonable Prayers, which God does not require of him, tires the patience of unhappy Men, (whom God commands him to hear favourably) by putting off the Juſtice which he ought to do them. How many Women, who ſpend in Works of Supererogation the time, which they ſhould ſpend in the performance of eſſential Duties, and who, whilſt they go from Church to Church, and from one Director to another, and are always ready to perform all the Devotional practices which are preſcribed to them, neglect that which is proper for them, and which God requires of 'em above all others; I mean, to give a

good

good Education to their Children, and to take care of their Families! I ſeldom undertake any thing but what I am fit for, and when I am forced to the contrary, I uſe Attention, Reflections, great Care and Exactneſs, and the Advices of the moſt Knowing Men, that I may diſcharge my Duty as well as I can.

REFLECTIONS

Upon FEAR.

1. I Give as little hold as I can to the fear of certain or uncertain Events; I am contented to ſtrengthen my ſelf by my Reflections againſt thoſe, which it is impoſſible for me to avoid, and to ſecure my ſelf by Prudence from thoſe, which are not ſo certain, as the Grief cauſed by Fear wou'd be certain. Moſt things do rather fright us than hurt us. (*Charron.*) "Fear is the greateſt and moſt troubleſom "of all Evils; for, other Evils are only "Evils, as long as they laſt, and the trou- "ble thereof is of no longer duration than "their Cauſe: But Men fear what is, and "what is not, and what perhaps will never "be, and even ſometimes what cannot be. He who fears to ſuffer, ſuffers already what he fears. There are no Evils but what are finite, and have certain bounds: Fear is the only unlimited Evil. (*Idem.*) "Poor "Men

" Men, how many voluntary Evils do you " ſuffer, beſides the neceſſary ones, which " Nature brings upon you! Fear proceeds " from Dangers, and does often expoſe us " to Dangers; for it begets an inconſiderate " deſire of getting out of 'em, and ſo aſto- " niſhes, troubles, and hinders us from ta- " king the right way to get out of 'em; it " cauſes a violent Trouble, wherewith the " Soul being frighted, retires within it ſelf " and ſtruggles, not knowing how to a- " void the preſent Danger. Beſides the " great diſcouragement it produces, it " ſtrikes us with ſuch an amazement, that " we loſe our Wits and Speech, and it " makes us run away, tho' no body pur- " ſues us, and even from our Friends, who " come to our help.

2. I ſhou'd be always an unhappy Man, did I fear every thing that may hurt me. I deſire only to be Prudent with reſpect to ſuch things as may happen, and Reſolute with reſpect to thoſe that have happened. (*Montag. l.* 3.) " What does it a- " vail you to prevent your ill Fortune, to " loſe the preſent by the fear of what is " to come, and to be unhappy from this " very moment, becauſe you will be ſo in " time?

3. Is it neceſſary that I ſhou'd prevent Evils, to haſten a grief which I ſhall fear ſoon enough, when it comes, and to ſpoil the enjoyment of the preſent by the fear of what is to come? (*Charron.*) " Men muſt

" needs have a great mind to be unhappy, " ſeeing they don't expect Evils till they " come, but will go and fetch 'em, and ha- " ſten their coming, as thoſe who kill them- " ſelves for fear of Dying; I mean, that " they fore ſee Evils and Inconvenien- " cies out of curioſity, and weakneſs, " and out of a vain apprehenſion, and ex- " pect them with great Trouble and Un- " eaſineſs, even thoſe ,which perhaps, will " never touch 'em. Thoſe Men have a " mind to make themſelves Miſerable by " a real ſenſe of Mifery, and a long think- " ing upon it before-hand, which is often a " hundred times worſe than the Evil it " ſelf. He, who makes himſelf Miſerable now, becauſe he will perhaps be ſo one day, muſt needs be an Enemy to himſelf. *(Mont. l.* 1.) " They who are afraid of loſing " their Eſtates, of being Baniſhed, or Sub- " dued, live in a continual anguiſh, and " can neither Eat, nor Drink, nor Sleep; " where as the Poor,they that are baniſhed, " and Slaves are often as chearful as others. " *(Idem l.* 3.) " Alas! Poor Man! Thou " art ſubject to ſo many neceſſary Inconve- " niencies,that thou needeſt not increaſe 'em " by thy invention; and thou art naturally " Miſerable enough, without being ſo by " Art: Thou haſt ſo many real Deformi- " ties, that there is no need for thee to " forge ſome imaginary ones.

4. Of

4. Of all the uncertain things which I may fear, the moſt apparent is not ſo certain, as it is certain that I did not fall into all the dangers which I feared.

5. I am not ſo frighted with the Merit of other Men, as to tremble with fear in their preſence: For tho' we be never ſo much prepoſſeſt in favour of a Man of great Reputation; we need not frequent him long, to find out that one muſt abate a great deal of the Exaggerations of Fame. and that every Body has his weak ſide, which brings him as near the Vulgar, as he is far from it by his Merit. (*St. Evremond.*)

REFLECTIONS.

For the Comfort of thoſe who are in Poverty.

1. MEn are ſo fond and ſo greedy of Riches, that one dares not ſpeak boldly in favour of Poverty. It is true, that Riches procure us a great many conveniencies; but it is true likewiſe, that they never make us happy, and that they are contrary to our Happineſs, becauſe they do commonly deprive us of our tranquillity. But we may enjoy that tranquillity in a great meaſure, if we know how to bear patiently our Poverty; we muſt at leaſt endeavour to do it, when we are deſtitute of Riches, and have no reaſon to hope for them.

2. The leſs I deſire, the leſs I ſhall find my poverty intolerable. Men are poor, not ſo much becauſe they have but little, as becauſe they deſire more than they have; wherefore I don't think ſo much of increaſing what I poſſeſs, as I think of moderating my deſires. " *(Seneca.)* How miſerable is a " Man, who glories in keeping a large Re- " giſter of his yearly Revenues, in getting " vaſt Fields, plowed by his Slaves, in having " innumerable Flocks, in being attended " with an Army of Servants, and in walk- " ing in his Palace the Extent whereof looks " more like a Town, than a private Man's " Houſe! When he has much conſidered all " his Riches he'll confeſs he is poor, if he " compares what he deſires with what he " enjoys. Tho' Fortune ſhou'd take away nothing from a Man greedy of Riches, yet he will always reckon among his Loſſes what he cannot acquire; and conſequently tho' he loſes nothing, he will be as much afflicted, as if he had loſt a great deal. He wiſhes for what he has not, and does not enjoy what he has; he is no leſs ſenſible to imaginary, than to real Loſſes. It is a great miſtake, to fancy that Rich Men bear their Loſſes with more Courage and Reſolution than the poor. A tall Man is as ſenſible to the pain of a Wound as a little one. They, who have a fine Head of Hair, can no more bear to have it pluckt off, than bald Men. I have reaſon to believe that if it be a good thing to enjoy what one deſires

ſires, it is no leſs a good thing to deſire only what one enjoys. Let us therefore be careful to conform our diſires to our Fortune; for if we permit 'em to go farther, they'll carry us into ſome imaginary Spaces, where we ſhall find no Reſt, for want of Solidity. I ſhall be rich in ſome meaſure, if I don't care to be ſo.

3. I have Riches enough, if I meaſure them by the wants of Nature. It requires that I ſhou'd feel neither hunger, nor thirſt, nor cold; and the Habit of Education requires that I ſhou'd be cloathed lodged, *&c.* I have, I thank God, wherewith to ſupply all thoſe Wants, in a plain way only; but it is enough for me, who always look'd upon ſuperfluities, as ſo many occaſions of trouble and uneaſineſs; becauſe they cannot be got without many Cares. A Man may ſatisfy his hunger for a ſmall matter, but he muſt pay dear to ſatisfy his daintineſs, and 'tis the ſame with other exceſſes. Nature deſires nothing, but what may be found every where: Men torment themſelves moſt to get ſuperfluous things. That which was ſuperfluous at firſt, becomes ſo neceſſary in time, that one cannot be eaſy without it. We never know how many ſuperfluous things but are, than when they begin to fail us; for we uſed them, not becauſe they were neceſſary to us, but becauſe we had them. How many things did we make uſe of, becauſe others made uſe of 'em! One of the greateſt cauſes of our Evils, is that

we follow the Example of others, and will not be governed by Reaſon, but by Opinion and Cuſtom. Aſſoon as an Error is become publick, it becomes a Virtue for us. "(*Seneca*) All the Proviſions in the World "cou'd not ſatisfy me, if I was extremely "deſirous of ſuperfluous things. (*Montag.* "*l.* 1.) A poor Man does not want ſo ma- "ny things to live a quiet and eaſy Life, as "a Rich Man to live a Magnificent one. (*St.* "*Evrem.*) Let us therefore regulate our "deſires according to our neceſſity. (*Ho-* "*race L.* 1. *Sat.* 2.) Nature has ſet ſome "bounds to our deſires: And were it not "better for us to look for thoſe bounds, that "we might know what it does or does not "require, and that we might learn by that "means to diſtinguiſh uſeleſs and ſuperflu- "ous things from thoſe, that are uſeful and "neceſſary? When you are tormented "with Thirſt, muſt you have a Golden Cup "to drink in? And when you are almoſt "ſtarved with Hunger, cou'd you reliſh no "other Meat beſides a Pea-Cock and a Tur- "bot? Why do you croſs the Sea, and run "all over the World? (ſaid a *Barbarian* of *Braſil* to ſome Travellers, who went over the Sea to ſeek Riches) "is your Coun- "try ſo poor, that it cannot afford you "wherewithal to live? Will great Riches "make you more acceptable to God? Will "they keep you from dying? If you tell me "that you are glad to leave 'em to your "Children; ſeeing the Earth is ſufficient

to

"to maintain you and your Parents, won't "it be ſufficient for your Children and your "Poſterity?

4. If you are poor, you will not be loaded with ſo heavy a Weight; you'll be leſs troubled with Fear. If we reflect well upon the inconſtancy of Fortune, we ſhall find that rich Men have reaſon to Fear, and that the poor have reaſon to Hope.

5. My Poverty does not make me bluſh at all, nothing but Vices can make me aſhamed of my ſelf: If I was aſhamed of my Poverty, 'tis very likely that I ſhou'd be proud, if I was Rich. If I was poor by my fault, I ſhou'd not be aſhamed of my Poverty, but of the fault which made me poor. It is true, that rich Men ſlight and deſpiſe thoſe, who are poor and Indigent in compariſon of 'em; but to make amends for ſuch an ill treatment, I'll endeavour to enrich my Mind with the moſt neceſſary Sciences, my Soul with Virtues, and my Heart with Generoſity and Conſtancy; that I may know by my Study and Reflections, wherein the Supream Good conſiſts, and procure it to my ſelf, and that I may be enabled by my courage and firmneſs, to reſiſt every thing that might hinder me from acquiring and enjoying it. With ſuch a Knowledge, I ſhall not be a Baſe Man, to pleaſe thoſe that are Rich; becauſe I ſhall be able to know what difference there is between their falſe Goods and the true one. With ſuch a Virtue, I

ſhall think my ſelf more happy than they, if they don't do ſo well as I do. With ſuch a Courage and Generoſity I ſhall not baſely tremble in their Preſence, as a Man dazzled by the luſtre of their Riches, and fearful by reaſon of their Pride and Haughtineſs: For it is but too true, that Poverty makes a Man Timorous, and that the timorouſneſs of the poor renders 'em very often contemptible in the Eyes of Rich Men. When a poor Man ſpeaks to a rich Man, he ſeems to have ſo ſhallow and ſo narrow a Wit, that every Body pities him. Yet there are many poor Men, who have a great deal of Senſe, and a vaſt Genius: But how comes it then that ſuch a poor Man ſeems to reaſon ſo ill? 'Tis becauſe he is in the preſence of that rich Man, on whom he depends, and whoſe Favours he expects; he had rather appear uncapable of Reaſoning well, that he may eaſily obtain wherewithal to ſupply his Wants, than contradict that rich Man with ſome ſtrong and judicious Arguments, whereby he might be in danger of making an Enemy of him inſtead of a Benefactor. There is nothing more common than ſuch a timorous behaviour of the Poor towards the Rich; which moved Monſieur *de la Bruyere*, to give us ſo natural and ſo reſembling a Character of the ſuffering, timorous, and baſhful poor Man in theſe words: *Phedon* has hollow Eyes, a pale Complexion, a thin Body, and a lean Face; he ſleeps little,

little, and his ſleep is not very ſound; he is thoughtful and diſtracted; and tho' he has a great deal of Wit, he looks like a ſtupid Man; he forgets to ſay what he knows, or to mention ſuch Matters of Fact as are known to him; and if he does it ſometimes, 'tis but poorly; he is afraid of being troubleſom to thoſe he ſpeaks to; he diſcourſes briefly, but coldly, he is not minded, he makes no Body laugh; he praiſes others, and ſmiles, when they ſpeak to him, he is of their Mind; he runs, he flies to do them ſome ſmall Services; he is Complaiſant, Flattering, and very Officious; he is myſterious about his Affairs, and ſometimes he Lies; he is Superſtitious, Scrupulous, and Timorous; he walks Softly and Lightly, ; one wou'd think he is afraid to touch the Ground; he walks looking downwards, and he dares not lift up his Eyes to look upon thoſe who go by; he is never one of thoſe who ſit round to Diſcourſe together, he ſtands behind the Perſon who ſpeaks; he picks up by ſtealeth what he hears, and retires, if any Body looks upon him; he fills no Place; he takes up no room, he ſneaks away with his Hat hanging over his Eyes, that he may not be ſeen; he muffles up himſelf in his Cloak; there are no Streets nor Galleries, tho' never ſo incumbred and full of People, but he goes through them without ſtruggling, and ſlips away without being ſeen: If he be deſired to ſit down, he has much ado to place himſelf upon the edge

edge of a Seat; he ſpeaks low in Converſation, and does not pronounce his words diſtinctly, and yet he is free about the Publick Affairs, angry with the preſent Time, and not much prepoſſeſt in favonr of the Miniſters and Miniſtry: He never opens his Mouth but to Anſwer; he Coughs, he wipes his Noſe in his Hat, he ſpits upon his Cloaths, and he puts off Sneezing till he is alone; or if he Sneezes, the company does not perceive it; no Body puts off his Hat to him; no Body makes him a Compliment: *He is Poor.*

6. If I was a very rich Man, my Riches wou'd not put an end to my Miſeries, they wou'd only change the nature of 'em: I ſhou'd be inabled to enjoy many Pleaſures, but at the ſame time they wou'd occaſion a great many cares. Men are deſirous of Riches, that they may live a pleaſant Life; they expoſe their Health and their Lives, to acquire 'em; and at laſt, when they have 'em, they live an uneaſy Life to preſerve and increaſe 'em. We ſee every day that a poor Man laughs more frequently and more heartily than a rich one: The Reaſon of it is, becauſe the former does frequently enjoy the little he has, whereas the latter deſires with great uneaſineſs what he has not. Rich Men are commonly leſs pleaſed with what they have, than troubled with the deſire of getting what they have not.

7. Sup-

7. Suppoſe I had many fine Houſes, and many Ribble-rows of Appartments, I ſhan't have many Bodies for az that, I ſhall have but one; I cou'd not buy another, tho' I was worth ſeveral Millions: Having there-but one Body, do I want ſo many Houſes, ſo many Chambers, ſo many Beds, ſo many Tables, and ſo many Servants? Tho' our Riches increaſe never ſo much, our Senſes will not increaſe to enjoy them; on the contrary, they'll leſſen every day. *(M. de Vernage.)*

8. If Men ſet a great value upon Riches, it is certain that they are very inconſiderable in the Eyes of God, ſeeing he does not beſtow them plentifully upon good Men, but on the contrary, wicked Men have the greateſt ſhare of 'em. *(Charron.)*

" We muſt not therefore be ſo fond of the " Riches of this World, which are neither " Good, nor can make a Man Good, which " are commonly in the hands of the moſt " Wicked, which do often corrupt good " Manners, and never mend ill ones, with-" out which ſo many Wiſe Men have lived " a happy Life, and by reaſon of which, " many Wicked Men have been unhappy.

We may be eaſily convinced that Riches are dangerous. They animate all the Paſſions of Men, they diſcover their bad Inclinations, tho' they lye never ſo hid, and they excite their propenſion to Evil, becauſe they enable 'em to do it eaſily. They put Voluptuous Men in a capacity of ſatisfying their

their Senſes, by reliſhing the moſt unlawful Pleaſures, and the moſt ſenſual Delicacies; they move Ambitious Men to trample upon thoſe whom they meet in their way, by procuring to themſelves the Honours which their Pride made 'em ſo fond of; they enable Revengeful Men to buy the Means of pouring the bitterneſs of their Anger upon their Enemies, and of making 'em feel the moſt cruel Effects of their Hatred and Averſion; by their help, Idle and Laſy Men indulge themſelves in Softneſs and Indolence, which commonly ariſe from Idleneſs; the very Hypocrites know how to make uſe of 'em to produce outwardly ſome ſhining Good Works, which have no Merit in themſelves, becauſe they are deſtitute of a right Intention, and done only to obtain the Praiſes and Approbation of the Spectators. Laſtly, One may very often ſay of Riches, that they have been heaped up out of a ſordid Intereſt, and afterwards ſcattered out of Luxury, or kept out of Avarice, or ſquandred away out of Imprudence, or loſt by Gaming, or conſumed to ſatisfy one's Luſts. As to the Religion of thoſe who are paſſionately fond of 'em, it may be ſaid, that if they have any, it is a Sacrilegious Religion, which they form out of their Avarice. If a Covetous Man has any Faith, it is an Impious one; becauſe he repoſes an intire confidence in his Covetouſneſs, and is altogether governed by its Maxims: If he has any Hope,

Hope, it is an unlawful one; becauſe he places his ſupream Good in the Riches, which his Covetouſneſs moves him to acquire: If he has any Charity, it is an abominable one, becauſe he loves all thoſe periſhable things (which his Covetouſneſs prompts him to ſeek) more than God and all the Heavenly Riches, which he offers to him: If he has any Fortitude, it is only to indure the Toils and Labours, which his Covetouſneſs puts him upon: If he has any Prudence, it is only to avoid the Loſſes, which his Covetouſneſs makes him afraid of: If he has any Temperance, it is only not to run into any Exceſs, that may conſiderably leſſen his Silver and Gold, which his Covetouſneſs made him hoard up with ſo much Trouble and ſo many Cares: If he has any Juſtice, it is only when it may be conſiſtent with his Intereſt, from which his Covetouſneſs never permits him to depart: He Faſts, I own it, but his Covetouſneſs makes him Sober: He deprives himſelf of his Eaſe and of his Conveniencies; but his Covetouſneſs is the only cauſe of his Mortification: He endures the injuries of Weather, and other Inconveniencies; but his Covetouſneſs hardens him: He abhors ſome unlawful Pleaſures; but his Covetouſneſs is the only reaſon of the purity of his Life. Laſtly, He is continually agitated, and full of Jealouſie and Diſtruſt: His Covetouſneſs makes him foreſee nothing, but burning of Houſes, Plunderings

derings of Soldiers, Years of Sterility and Famine, downfalls of Fortune, and other Events equally diſmal and imaginary; and in ſuch a dreadful Proſpect and ſuch a panick Fear, what will he not do to heap up Riches more and more? No Body knows the publick Miſery better than he, and yet no Body will be leſs concerned for it than he. We have ſeen what too great a deſire of Riches will do; which is ſufficient to make us afraid of 'em.

9. I ſhou'd be very deſirous and fond of Riches, if I cou'd buy Happineſs with them: But before we deſire a thing, and are eager to obtain it, it is very fit to examine the Happineſs of thoſe, who enjoy it. All that has been ſaid before, is a kind of an Examination of it; from whence one may conclude, that Rich Men are never Happy: They ſeem to others to be Happy; but they don't ſeem ſo to themſelves. Every Body thinks and ſpeaks the ſame; and I ſee no Rich Man, who affirms that there is no reaſon to think and ſpeak ſo.

10. Every Body ſees the Heavens, the Sun, the Stars, and all the other ſhining Beauties of Nature: But *N*--- does not value them, becauſe they are common, he muſt have Palaces, magnificent Goods, and gilt Cielings: Is he Happy with them? I ſay, No; for others have finer Cielings, more ſumptuous Goods, and more ſtately Palaces than he: 'Tis not the reality of thoſe Objects which pleaſes him; but he is pleaſed, becauſe he fancies to have what others have not.

11. There

11. There are a great many things, without which I can be out of reaſon, ſeeing I am never the worſe for being without 'em out of neceſſity. Our deſires of getting Riches, make 'em more valuable, than we find them to be, when our deſires are ſatisfied; as if they were leſs to be eſteem'd in themſelves, than by the eagerneſs we expreſs for them.

12. Tho' I deſpiſe Riches never ſo much, yet I don't deſpiſe thoſe who are in poſſeſſion of 'em. *N.* ſhews ſome indifferency for Riches, he ſays that no Man ought to be fond of 'em; and yet he is a Rich Man; But I don't blame him for that; I ſhou'd blame him, if he cou'd not be without his Riches, if he cou'd not be contented without 'em, if he made no good uſe of 'em, if he was proud of 'em. A Man is not to blame, becauſe he lives in a Palace, but becauſe he can't be contended with one Room; not becauſe he has a Dignity, but becauſe he is ambitious of it. *(St. Evrem.)* "A wiſe Man does not love Riches, but he "had rather have 'em, than ask for them. *(Seneca.)* "He does not receive them in his "Soul, but only in his Houſe: He does not "refuſe to enjoy them, but on the contrary, "he keeps 'em as a thing, *which may enable "him to ſhew* his Virtue. In effect, a Wiſe "Man has more occaſions to ſhew "his Generoſity, if he be rich, than if "he be poor. All the Virtue a poor Man "is capable of, is to keep his Courage without

"out ſuffering himſelf to be caſt down;
"but all Virtues appear among Riches,
"Temperance, Liberality, and good Order:
"It is a great Matter to abound with Riches,
"without being corrupted by them. It is
"a glorious thing to live like a poor Man in
"the midſt of 'em, but there is leſs danger in
"being without them. If I had rather be
rich than poor, it were becauſe there are
more miſerable Men, who wou'd be the
better for my Liberality, than there are
Wiſe Men, who wou'd be the better for my
Patience.

REFLECTIONS.

Upon the fear of Death.

1. WHen we do often think of Death, we make it familliar to us, and are leſs afraid of it. I know no Meditation, that is ſo neceſſary to me, as to meditate upon Death; becauſe of all the ſubjects, upon which one can meditate, there is none more ſure and more certain. (*Mont. l.* 1.)
"Let us therefore think always of Death;
"let us repreſent it to our Imagination at
"every moment, and with all its ſeveral
"Faces; at the ſtumbling of a Horſe, at the
"fall of a Tile, at the leaſt pricking of a Pin;
"I fancy at every Minute that I am making
"my Eſcape and I repeat over and over a-
"gain, That what may happen another
Day

" Day. No Man was ever better prepa-
" red for Death than I am. It will be ſaid that a Man may eaſily take ſuch Reflections, when he ſees Death afar off; but that he does not ſhew the ſame Courage when it is near: (*Ibid.*) " That it may
" be a Sham; that we make thoſe fine Phi-
" loſophical Diſcourſes only to keep a good
" Countenance; that the accidents of this
" Life don't affect us ſo much as to make
" us appear ſuch as we are; but that when
" Death ſhews its Face, we can no longer
" counterfeit our ſelves; that we muſt
" then ſpeak out, and that inſtead of ſhew-
" ing a good Courage, we ſhew nothing
" but Weakneſs and Fear. (*Idem.*) " It
" ſeems that Fortune does ſometimes
" watch the laſt day of our Lives, to ſhew
' her power of overthrowing in one day
" what ſhe has been building many Years,
" and to make us exclaim in theſe words,
" as *Laberius* did, *I have lived one day more*
" *than I ſhou'd have done.* All thoſe things may very well happen, nevertheleſs, it cannot be denied, that it is a uſeful thing to meditate upon Death; and tho' it were of no uſe then, yet it helps us to go thus far without Trouble and Fear, which is no inconſiderable thing.

2. When I leave this World, I ſhall be free from a great deal of trouble and uneaſineſs, and from a great many Cares, Torments and Dangers. Why ſhou'd I be

ſo much afraid of that which frees me from ſo many Evils.

3. Death is the condition of Life; I came into this World upon condition that I ſhou'd go out of it; I never loſe the ſight of that Condition, that I may not be ſurprized and amazed, when I am obliged to diſcharge it: I ſhall pay without murmuring the Tribute which I owe to Humane Nature.

4. I need not take great pains to think of Death: My very Life does continually repreſent it to my Imagination: I ſee that I am going to it every day by degrees and piece-meal: All the moments of my Life tend to Death; the laſt will, at length, come to it.

5. Why ſhou'd I be afraid of dying? Will my fear make Death uncertain? Can I doubt of the certainty of it? Can I be ſo unreaſonable as not to ſubmit to a thing that is unavoidable? Virtue is neceſſary, not to fear uncertain things; but as for thoſe, which are Infallible, Common Senſe is ſufficient to prepare us for them: For after all, I ſhall certainly die, I muſt therefore expect it: Tho' my apprehenſion be never ſo great, it will be of no uſe to me to prevent that unavoidable Blow: All my fears will prove only ſo many Wounds before I feel what is the cauſe of 'em. *(Charron.)* "A fooliſh Man is afraid of Death; "a Mad-man looks for it, but a Wiſe Man "expects it without being afraid of it.

6. If

6. If Men ſuffer much when they die, it is certain that their pains are ſoon over; for great pains don't laſt long: Tho' they be never ſo great, we do certainly feel greater and more laſting ones during this Life, which we are ſo unwilling to leave: The pains of Death, whatever they be, will free me from all others: What! ſhall I make my ſelf unhappy during ſo many Years for a thing, which will make me ſuffer but one Moment? Shall I be afraid ſo long of a thing, which will at laſt free me from all my Fears? But what reaſon have I to believe that Death is attended with great Sufferings? Do I know what it is? Perhaps it is more pleaſant than painful: Swoons, which are the moſt lively Image of it, give me ſome reaſon to believe it, when I conſider their voluptuous Inſenſibility. Sleep, which is another repreſentation of it, teaches me the ſame thing; at leaſt, I cannot affirm the contrary, ſeeing I don't know it neither by my Experence, nor by the Experience of others.

7. I ſhall die, that is, I ſhall go whither all things go: For we all go thither, ſome ſooner, ſome later; but at laſt, we muſt all come there. Can I fancy that I ſhall never arrive in a place, whither I am continually going? All thoſe who came before me, arrived there; all thoſe, who go with me, are in the way thither; and all thoſe, who ſhall come after me, will arrive there: The Great and Little ones; the Poor and

the Rich, the Ignorant and the Learned, Young and Old, Fools and Wiſe Men, all run in the ſame Career, and will ſtop at the ſame Gaol: How many People will die at the ſame time with me?

8. The things, wherewith Death is attended, are more frightful than Death it ſelf. *(Montag.)* "To ſpeak the Truth, we pre- "pare our ſelves againſt the preparations "of Death. We are frighted by the Tears and Cries of our Relations; by the great circumſpection wherewith we are told, that we are going to die; by our Phyſicians, who give us over; by a way of living ſo different from that, which we uſe when we are in Health; by the Viſits of our Friends, who look afflicted and ſorrowful; by a dark Room, into which the Air and the Sun are not let; by thoſe Wax-Tapers ready to be lighted for our Departure; by thoſe Pious Clergy-men, who mention nothing to us but our Grave, Temptations, Devils, a Judgment, a Hell, Diſtruſt, Fear, and Terror; and laſtly, by the remembrance of thoſe, whom we have ſeen dying or dead, and the ſight whereof was very frightful to us. *(Montag. l. 3.)* "I have "ſeen many a dying Man lamentably ſur- "rounded with a crowd of People; they "are ſtifled in it. When I remove by my Reflections all thoſe frightful Preparations, I find nothing in Death, but one Moment, wherein we ſet out from one Place to go into another: But into what Place? Into

a

a place of Happineſs, if I make a good uſe of my Life; for Death has nothing to do with it; a good Life is the Rule, the Surety and the Aſſurance of my Happineſs. I deſire to die quietly, quickly, and in private: I deſire a quiet Death after a good Life.

9. I think of Death in the midſt of Pleaſures; and therefore I don't give up my ſelf to their Charms: I think of Death in the midſt of my Sufferings; and therefore I don't fall into Deſpair. I don't know where Death will take hold of me, I will therefore expect it every where; I don't know at what Hour, I will therefore expect it at all times. (*Montagne* ſays, *l.* 1.) "I am not naturally Melancholy, but I "am a very thoughtful Man: I made "Death at all times the chief Subject of "my Meditations, even in the moſt licen-"tious part of my Life, amongſt the La-"dies, and in the midſt of my Sports: "Whilſt the Company thought that Jea-"louſie or the uncertainty of my Hopes, "made me Penſive and Uneaſy, I was "thinking of a certain Perſon, who died "ſome few Days before of a Feaver, which "hegot at his going away from a like En-"tertainment, having his Head full of Love "and Mirth as well as I, and that the "ſame Fate might very well attend me: "I was thinking ſo all the while, without "putting on a frowning Countenance. It "is true, that ſuch Thoughts will at firſt "give us ſome trouble; but time and a

" long uſe will make 'em familiar to " us. I carry my Meditations upon Death farther ſtill than *Montag.*; for I do often fancy that I am a dying, or that I am dead. I fancy that I am in my Death-Bed, given over by the Phyſicians, and ſurrounded with my Friends and Relations, who groan in my Preſence. I fall a raving, I don't know what I ſay, and at laſt, I loſe my Reaſon; My Feet and my Legs ſtretch themſelves, grow ſtiff, and remain without Heat and Motion; my Face changes pale, and ſhrinks; my Eyes ſink in my Head, and are ſcared; my Teeth blacken, my Tongue thickens and ſtutters; my Mouth rottens with a Cancer; my Throat rattles; all my Members grow cold and inſenſible; at laſt, I end my Life with a Hiccok, a Gaping, and a Grimace, which cauſes as great an horror to the Spectators, as it makes 'em ſhed Tears, and fetch Sighs; I end my Life as a Vapour, which Exhales; as ſome Spirits, which are exhauſted; as a Machine, which breaks and falls to pieces. As ſoon as I have given up the Ghoſt, they lay my Body upon Straw, they wrap it up in a Cloth, they ſhut it up in a Coffin, they carry it to the Grave, and they cover it with Earth. A dead Body never begs a Grave: The Horror, which ſurrounds me, forces the Living, and even my Relations and my beſt Friends, to part with me as ſoon as ever they can. Every Body goes away from me, every Body leaves

leaves me, every Body abandons me: Some poor Servants at moſt, or ſome charitable Perſons, will ſtay by me, and pay their laſt Duty to me, till I am carried out of my Chamber, whither I ſhall never come again. This is what I expect every day: No man did ever leſs rely upon his Life, than I, even in my moſt flouriſhing Youth: And therefore I believe that few men are as indifferent for the Good things of this World as I am. Alas! why do we take ſo much pains to get what we cannot enjoy but a little while? If men were to live for ever upon Earth, I believe they wou'd not give themſelves more trouble than they do, to get Eſtates. As for me, I think of it rather to follow the Example of others, than out of Reaſon: The ſhortneſs of Humane Life makes me ſo indifferent for every thing that goes by the name of Great Fortune, that I cou'd live from Hand to Mouth, if ſuch a judicious indifferency was not deſpiſed, and look'd upon as a kind of Indolence, and Lazineſs. If the queſtion is about Honours, Riches, or Pleaſures, I ſhall carry away none of thoſe Riches, and thoſe Honours will not hinder me from being reduced to a very low and mortifying State, I mean the Grave. I have ſuſtained ſome Loſſes, I am not troubled for it; for I ſhall die; Death wou'd have infallibly taken away from me what I have loſt by the Injuſtice of others. Thus reflecting often upon the laſt part of my Life,

I am not troubled for the Loſs of any periſhable things, becauſe I cannot be very fond of them.

10. If I ſeem to be too much afraid of departing this Life, I ſhall deprive my ſelf of ſuch helps as may enable me to die a happy Death. In effect, is there any Body ſo bold as to tell a Sick Man, who ſeems to be afraid of Death, that it is near at hand? Who dares to prepare him for it? On the contrary, great Care is taken to remove from him every thing, that may give him the leaſt ſuſpicion of it: His Wife uſes all imaginable precautions to diſwade thoſe, who ſeem to be Zealous enough to give him notice of it: His Children prevail upon the Phiſicians to make 'em promiſe him, that they will cure him, tho' they have given him over; HisFriends aſſure him, that he is in no danger, immediately after they have been told in his Anti-Chamber, that he cannot live two hours: His Servants, to confirm him in the ſame hopes, ſhew a chearful Countenance, having a little before wiped off the Tears, which his approahing Death made 'em ſhed. Laſtly, no Body dares tell him that he is a mortal Man, even when he is a dying, and the Miniſters of the Lord are never ſent for, to exhort him to accknowledge his Sins, and repent of 'em, but when he has loſt his Senſes and his Knowledge!

11. If I was too apprehenſive of Death, I ſhou'd certainly wiſh that it wou'd quickly take hold of me, to free me from that trou-

trouble; I had rather ſuffer one Death by dying, than to fear them all by living: I had rather die once, than be ſo often afraid of dying: Seeing we are threatned with ſo many ſorts of Deaths, is it not a worſe thing to fear them all, than to endure one? When we fear Death, we fear every thing, becauſe every thing may be the occaſion of it.

12. If I am ſorry to loſe my Life, before I die, I ſhall not be ſorry for having loſt it, when I am dead: How many reaſons ought to make me unconcern'd for the loſs of it, even before I loſe it!

13. The laſt hour of my Life is not at all the laſt hour of my Soul, it is only the laſt hour of my Body. I look upon all the things, that are about me, as the Goods of an Inn, wherein I do but lodge in my Journey, and which I am to leave the next Day. Nature ſearches all thoſe, who go out of this World, as well as all thoſe, who come into it: it will not permit me to carry out of it, more than I have brought into it: On the contrary, it will ſtrip me of my very Body. That Day, which every Body looks upon as the laſt Day of my Life, will be a Birth Day for me, to let me into Eternity. Death will not be the laſt Moment of my true Life, but only the laſt Moment of my mortal Life: The Death which I expect, will be the beginning of another Life, over which Death ſhall have no power. Seeing Religion teaches me that I ſhall enjoy in the

the next World ſo many infinite and eternal Good things, ſhall I be ſo unreaſonable as to be afraid of going out of this World, wherein I have only imaginary Goods, and true and real Evils? In effect, what is this World, which we are ſo afraid to leave? This World is a Compound of Vanity and Falſhood: Its Pleaſures are deceitful amuſements; its Careſſes are Treaſons; its Riches are things of no duration, by reaſon of their uncertainty; its Felicities are meer ſhadows and phantoms of Happineſs, which amuſe and cheat us, and will frequently end with a real unhappineſs. This World is a Crowd of different Figures, which offer themſelves to our Eyes, and then vaniſh away; a Revolution of Conditions and Fortunes, which begin and have an end, which riſe, and fall again; a Viciſſitude of ſecret or viſſible Corruptions. When this World flatters us with the hopes of Liberty, we find nothing in it but Trouble and Slavery; when it flatters us with the hopes of Peace and Quietneſs, we find nothing in it but Vexation and Uneaſineſs; when it flatters us with the hopes of Joy, we find nothing in it but Bitterneſs. Its moſt tender Friendſhips have an end; Its Honours are only ſome ſpecious Titles, which time defaces; its Pleaſures are meer amuſements, which leave frequently behind them, long and diſmal Sorrows; its Grandeurs fall of themſelves; its Glory and Reputation will be loſt in time in the Abyſs of an eternal

nal Oblivion: There is nothing in all its Creatures, that can make us happy; becauſe there is nothing in them, that can fill up the capacity of our Hearts: They are too little in themſelves, and their Power is too weak: It is true, that their Beauty ſtrikes our Eyes; their Praiſes flatter our Ears; their ſweetneſs pleaſes our Taſt; their Riches fit our Bodies; but none of 'em can fully ſatisfy our Minds: They may indeed take up and incumber our Hearts, but they can neither ſatisfy nor fill them up; becauſe thy are only falſe Goods, Illuſions and Shadows, or rather real Evils, which make a Man worſe, and do not keep him from being unhappy. The moſt glittering Fortune is not only vain and inconſtant, but alſo troubleſome, and full of bitterneſs and ſorrows: A Man may ſigh and be uneaſy upon a Throne, as well as in Irons. Virtue does continually ſuffer Ship-wrack in this World; Sincerity it not ſafe; Piety dares not ſhew its Head; Humility bluſhes and is aſhamed; Chaſtity is continually aſſaulted; a voluntary Poverty and a forced one are treated with the like indignation: Whoever ſhews any conſtancy in the performance of his Duty, appears ridiculous in this World; whoever does not conform to its Galantries, s look'd upon as a Man of no politeneſs; whoever raiſes himſelf above his Senſes, to apply himſelf to ſuch Objects as are moſt worthy of God and Religion, goes by the Name of a Fanatick.

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This World affords pernicious Maxims, and ſeducing Examples; its Morals corrupt the Heart, and its Errors deceive the Mind; its Politicks make uſe of Religion no farther, than it ſerves to compaſs one's ends; its Hypocriſy dreſſes the moſt ſhameful Vices in the Habit of Virtue; it is full of violences which make us commit ſeveral crimes, and of Flatteries to excuſe them, that they may be committed with more facility, and leſs reluctancy. I find in the confuſed Chaos of this World, an infinite multitude of Men animated with different Paſſions, ſwell'd with Pride, blinded by Intereſt, bewitched with Love, tranſported by Hatred, tormented with Envy, corrupted by Lazineſs, and ſoftened by Pleaſures: It is an unfortunate Region, where Corruption is ſo general, that to corrupt one's ſelf and others is the mutual Employment of moſt Men; it is almoſt an univerſal Sect of People, who deceive others or are deceived by them; it is a Crowd of reſtleſs Men, who knock one againſt another to indulge their Pride, to ſatisfy their Ambition, or to promote their Intereſt. What a Corruption in Men's Manners! What a Luxury in their Cloaths! How many Tricks in the Law! How many Frauds in Trade! How many Treaſons amongſt Friends! How many Acts of unfaithfulneſs in Marriage! What Hypocriſy in Devotion! What Luke-warmneſs and Indifferency for things relating to Salvation! Don't we ſee the Slaves of this World always agitated, and

running

running into Exceſſes ; mad in their Love, furious in their Hatred, inraged in their Jealouſy, ſo Melancholly as to fall into deſpair, ſo paſſionate as to loſe their Reaſon, and ſo Senſual as to be as much unconcern'd for their Souls, as if they had none? Alas ! Muſt I love the World, becauſe it flatters me with the hopes of Elevation, Honour, Power, Learning, and Riches ? But, who is more Elevated than God, who is above all Creatures? Who has more Honour paid him than God, for whom ſo many Altars ſmoke, to whom ſo many Sacrifices are offered up, to whom ſo many Scepters ſtoop, whom ſo many Crowned Heads obey ? Who is more powerful than God ; before whom States, Kingdoms, and Empires are but, as it were, a heap of Duſt and Smoak, which he can ſcatter and deſtroy in a moment ? Who is more Formidable than God, at whoſe command the Thunder roars, the Lightning flyes about, the Thunder-Bolt falls, the Elements ſtruggle, and Nature ſets up its Scaffolds ? Who is more Learned and more knowing than God, who ſees all things in himſelf, who has an Abyſs of Knowledge in his Heart, and Riches of eternal Wiſdom in his Boſom ; before whom time has no Bounds, Nature no Vail, High things no Heighth, and Abyſſes no Depth ? Who is more Rich than God, who makes the Feilds pleaſant, Flowers beautifull, and Trees fruitful, who beſtows Gold and Silver upon Mines, Pearls upon Nakers, Diamonds

monds upon Rocks, and Fecundity upon the whole Nature? Laſtly, who is more worthy of our eternal Love than God, in whom we ſee whatever is Beautiful, in whom we love whatever is Good, in whom we enjoy whatever is Great, in whom we taſte whatever is ſweet, in whom we ſee Original Truth, in whom we love Original Beauty, in whom we enjoy the Supreme Good, and taſt the Supreme Pleaſure; in whom we find Good without Evil, Pleaſure without Pain, Plenty without Poverty, Life without the fear of Death, and a Felicity which nothing can alter or deſtroy? I hope to be admitted into the Boſom of that Great God, when I leave this World; and therefore I am not at all uneaſy at the Thoughts of Death.

14. The leſs I ſhall enjoy this unhappy World, the fewer obſtacles I ſhall be obliged to overcome, in order to enjoy the Felicity of another World: In effect, we are willing to ſave our ſelves; but this World wou'd deprive us of our Salvation. We are willing to have a clear and diſtinct Knowledge of our Duties, and of all the Truths that are ſo eſſential to our Salvation; but this World uſes all ſorts of Artifices, to bring us into Error. We acknowledge that we ſhall be undone, if we are fond of ſenſual Pleaſures; but this World offers them continually to us, in order to corrupt us. God requires of us, that we ſhou'd love him above all things; but the

the World requires of us that we ſhou'd love Creatures above him. God commands us to love our Neighbours ſo as to forget their injuries; but the World calls us Cowards, if we don't revenge our ſelves. God requires of us ſo ſteddy a Faith, that we may be ready to die for it at any time; but the World does all it can to take away from us the ſenſe of Religion, that we may be ſo weak, as to be caſt down and overcome by the leaſt Humane conſideration. God aſſures us that they who ſuffer, who weep, who are in adverſity, ſhall be ſaved; but the World excites us to place our happineſs in Proſperity. It happens ſometimes that a Man has lived well, becauſe he did not live long; For it is a very difficult thing to be a long time in the midſt of dangers, without being overcome by them.

15. Whilſt I am in this World, I think more upon the Good things I hope, than upon thoſe which I am to leave: The former are real, and will laſt for ever; but the latter are falſe, and will certainly ſteal away from me, if I don't ſteal away from them. Alas! What ſignifies it, whether I be here or ſomewhere elſe, provided I be well?

16. Why ſhou'd I be afraid of Death, ſeeing it is in my Power to make it a moſt happy thing for me? I ought to fear it only, according as I live an ill Life. A good Life depends upon me; but a long

Life

Life does not at all depend upon me; for 'tis impoſſible for me to add one Moment to my laſt Hour. I ſhall make my Death happy, if I live a good Life: He that will be worthy of the favours of Death, muſt make a good uſe of the favours of Life.

17. I will not be therefore ſo much afraid of Death, but only learn how to die well. I am highly concerned to know how to do well a thing, which I ſhall never do but once, the event whereof is doubtful, the conſequences whereof may prove diſmal, and its faults irreparable. If I deſire to die happily, my Vices will die with me. All my Phyloſophy, my Learning, and my Prudence conſiſt in preparing my ſelf for Death. One of the moſt uſefull advices I can give my ſelf, is to think often of my laſt Hour, and to regulate my whole Life upon its laſt Moment; that I may leave, out of a ſenſe of Religion, what I muſt leave out of Neceſſity; and that I may provide, during the little time I am to be in this World, for what I am to be for ever in the next. A happy Death will Crown my whole Life. I ſhall then very willingly ſay to Hope and Fortune,

Inveni portum; Spes & Fortuna, valete:
Nil mihi vobis cum, ludite nunc alios.

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FINIS.